ASPECTS OF COLOUR MODELLING IN FLORENCE FROM 1480 - 1530

Julia Anne DeLancey

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
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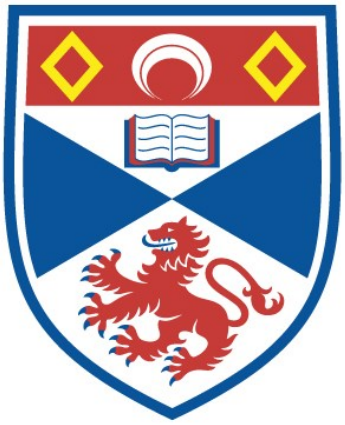
University of St Andrews



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School of Art History

Julia Anne DeLancey

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

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To my parents

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ILLUSTRATIONS[1]

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[1] The footnotes appear as a reminder of the paintings and not with any claim to be a closely accurate record of the original colour. In some cases, figure numbers on these pages may not run consecutively; this has been done to assure that comparative images appear on the same page, while maintaining the order of the figure numbering in the text.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis sets out to examine two new issues: the use of the colour modelling system in Florence in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth-ceturies and the way it impacts the relationship between six artists who lived and worked for the most part in Florence during that period. Among these artists exist strong ties of studios, common patrons and working locations. Florence has traditionally been identified with *disegno* and Venice with *colorito*, although these associations are gradually being everturned; by looking at the clear and consistent use by Florentine artists of colour for expressive and volumetric means, it is hoped to gain a greater and more sophisticated understanding of these relationships. The first chapter looks at the work of Domenico Ghirlandaio and his *bottega*, one of the largest and for our purposes most influential studios in Florence; for comparison and also because of his rôle in the issue, Filippino Lippi enters as well. A chapter on Michelangelo, Ghirlandaio's most famous pupil, follows; the cleaned frescoes of the Sistine chapel provide one of the main foci of discussion for colour in the thesis, due to their great fame and dramatic colour use. These are discussed together with the *Doni Tondo* and the London *Entombment*. The middle two chapters focus on Andrea del Sarto, Fra Bartolommeo and the San Marco *compagnia*, the artists to stay in Florence after the departure of Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael and who taught many of the next generation of artists. The last two chapters deal with Jacopo Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino; as heirs and successors to these earlier artists, Rosso and Pontormo continue in the use of this same colour modelling tradition, but employing it with dramatically different results.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In late twentieth-century art history it may seem surprising to write a dissertation which focuses on a formal quality such as colour. Many of the studies currently published deal either with new contextual interpretations of works or with new documentary discoveries, both of which are extremely important. And yet a great deal may still be learned from examining the more formal elements of art; colour continues to be a fruitful area of investigation and one continuing to grow and develop in recent years. This thesis sets out to examine the way a particular group of artists working in Florence during the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries used colour: specifically, their motivations, their methods, and their aims. All of the artists to be covered -- Domenico Ghirlandaio, Michelangelo, Fra Bartolommeo, Andrea del Sarto, Jacopo Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino -- began their careers in Florence and with the exception of Michelangelo and Rosso, spent almost their entire lives living and working in that city. During this time period, these are the people who consistently created images for the Florentine environment and those almost always dealt with colour on one level or another. Additional artists such as Filippino Lippi appear when relevant, but for the most part attention will focus on these six painters. Connections may be drawn between all of these artists in terms of apprenticeships, friendships and partnerships; when discussing the exchanges between them regarding colour we may deal with hypotheses knowing that there were concrete contacts between all of them.

Works in the public arena, works which would have been readily available to all artists in Florence, such as altarpieces and decorated chapels, serve as the main focus of the analysis. This is not to imply that artists do not make important colour statements in portraits or small-scale *Madonnas*, but rather that it is difficult to discern what influence these would have had on other artists when for the most part during the artists' lifetimes these types of images remained in the *palazzi* or villas for which they were commissioned. It is also important that the works dealt with be ones which were in the public domain, so that all painters could have seen them and therefore been open to their influence.

The Sistine chapel presents a somewhat unique problem for the discussion in terms of certain access. While it is tempting to want documentation for each artist's

trip to Rome, we have no specific evidence of a particular time when any of the artists with the exception of Fra Bartolommeo went to Rome; however, we also tend to underestimate how much people were willing to travel during this period. If artists did not produce studies of objects known to be in Rome during their visit, it is often impossible to prove whether or not a trip was taken and if so when. However, with strong new such as the colour in the Sistine chapel, we can begin to look for changes in colour style which might have been prompted by exposure to those frescoes.

Colour did not receive substantial and exclusive attention until John Shearman's still unpublished 1957 dissertation on colour use in Tuscany in the early sixteenth century. Prior to his work colour in painting remained in the realm of connoisseurship, rather than an object of in-depth research. Shearman not only brought colour into that sphere, but also introduced new ways of reading colour compositions, such as isometrically. While his work remains an important source for anyone studying colour or that period, substantial restoration work has been done since then, meaning that many of these works deserve a second examination.

More recently, Linda Caron has focused her attention on modelling techniques and also on some of the artists dealt with herein, particularly Rosso Fiorentino; her doctoral dissertation examined colour use in Rome during a three year period in the 1520s. She not only drew attention to more recently explored artists such as Sebastiano and Polidoro, but also began to discuss in her thesis and subsequent publications different modelling styles during that period and how they could be used in diverse ways by various artists. Marcia Hall has picked up on this strain in her recent book on colour and meaning in the Renaissance, setting down in print issues dealt with by scholars in lectures and papers on Renaissance colour. Other authors such as J. Gavel and Maurice Poirier have made crucial contributions to our understanding of the contributions of colour theory. More recently Martin Kemp and John Gage have written important histories of colour. Furthermore, we have numerous, thorough, and insightful restoration reports; these have provided invaluable information, allowing us to begin to asses artists' techniques and use of raw materials as we examine colour. However, we still need much more information in this area, particularly on pigments and how they were dealt with during the period in terms of trade and import.

Rather than the macrocosm of these large scale interpretations of colour throughout history this dissertation will treat the microcosm of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Florence. Like Linda Caron's dissertation it will focus on colour during a particular time and in a particular place. The obvious difference is between breadth of dates, and between Rome and Florence. Unlike the painters involved in her work, all of the artists treated herein are native to the city in question, creating

additional questions of whether a civic style predominates and the extent to which the artists embraced it, either in a positive or negative manner. There has not been a tradition of Florentine colour up to this point; our understanding of it has increased with the cleaning of the Sistine chapel frescoes. However, a more in-depth investigation is needed to understand the source of that surprising colour and what specific impact the colour had.

The dissertation is arranged according to artist, with each chapter focusing on not only that individual painter's colour style and the relationship between works by other artists being created concurrently. The chapters are arranged chronologically, beginning with Ghirlandaio and centring on his work in the Tornabuoni chapel. Filippino Lippi also plays a role in that chapter due to his concurrent work at the Strozzi chapel and the relevance of his Carafa chapel in Rome to the topic. A chapter on Ghirlandaio's most famous pupil follows, which mainly deals with the Sistine chapel and the *Doni Tondo*, the only paintings done by Michelangelo which would have had an influence during the time period examined. Next come two chapters on the main artists to arise after the departure from Florence of Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael: Fra Bartolommeo and Andrea del Sarto. These two also play a major role as the masters of the last two artists to be dealt with, Pontormo and Rosso. The treatment of Pontormo will be divided into two smaller chapters: first, the work up to and including the Passion cycle for the Certosa, which includes an examination of the role of the Carthusian order in the nature of Pontormo's images. Second, the Capponi chapel in Santa Felicità and subsequent paintings. Pontormo receives this greater attention in part because some of his works make the strongest impact for the topic at hand. Additionally, Pontormo had perhaps the closest and most prolonged involvement with most of the artists in Florence at that time, and therefore needs a somewhat more lengthy analysis. The following chapter examines the career of Rosso Fiorentino who, unlike Pontormo, spent a substantial amount of his time outside Florence; because the thesis centres on Florentine art, Rosso's French works do not appear herein. Since his Roman career has already been explored in depth in Linda Caron's work, less discussion of that period of Rosso's *oeuvre* appears. A concluding chapter explores the broader themes which arise out of the thesis such as naturalism, expression, continuity and change as they relate to colour. Throughout, attention is drawn to collaborations and concurrently created works in order to better understand the interactions between the artists. In the case of collaborative works, the comparative discussion follows the analysis of the last artist involved.

Until art historians dealing with colour can come to a consensus as to what colour terms should universally be used, definitions must continue to be made. In this dissertation the terms hue, tonality and saturation will be used. Hue refers to the

inherent colour of a form, to the fact that it is red as opposed to blue. Tonality refers to the colour's placement in a tonal or grey scale -- or to the amount of white or black added. The saturation scale indicates the relative strength or brightness of hue. The various modelling techniques -- colour or hue modelling, hue change or *cangiante*, tonal modelling and *chiaroscuro* will be discussed below in the context of the writer with whom they are generally associated.

One of the additional problems in writing about colour is the subjectivity with which each viewer perceives colour. With this in mind, the simplest possible colour terms have been used to avoid confusion. While it might be possible to use a more objective labelling system such as Pantone colour charts or pigment names, these both have considerable problems with regards contact with the physical work and inconsistencies regarding condition and alteration of hue over time. For these reasons basic colour terms have been used throughout with an eye to describing accurately colour passages and yet still allowing the viewer some freedom in interpretation.

Before beginning these analyses, it is important to understand the theoretical underpinnings to colour use during this period. Theoretical discussions of colour during the Renaissance tended to ebb and flow, with major advances occurring around the 1420s and the 1500s; notably, none of the artists this thesis examines wrote about colour, nor do they seem to be intimately involved with what seem to have been the more modern developments, at least in an authorial sense. Much of the recent literature has focused on theory and its development, so that neither a definitive nor extensive discussion will be given here, as it would be somewhat redundant. However, it is necessary to remind ourselves of the main ideas in currency at the time at hand so that we may understand how these artists would have understood colour.

Cennino Cennini, Leon Battista Alberti and Leonardo da Vinci made the most important theoretical contributions up to and including 1480-1530. Each of these writers painted as well, although in the case of Cennino we know of no surviving works by his hand, and we have no surviving paintings by Alberti. Despite this, it is relatively easy to trace their impacts: Cennino recorded the existing technique, determined by materials and accepted workshop practice; Alberti began to develop a colour theory separate from technique; and Leonardo wrote treatises which, although they eventually dealt with technique, began with in-depth explorations of colour theory.

Cennino Cennini's *Il Libro dell' Arte*, written around 1400 by a painter trained in the workshop tradition, provides a book of practical wisdom related to the process of painting. Cennino discusses everything from how to apply gold leaf to what kind of egg yolks to use when painting particular ages or types of faces. With regards to

colour he ranges from what the nature of the various colours to aesthetics. We know from Cennino's own account that he was trained for twelve years as a pupil of Agnolo Gaddi, who learned it from his father Taddeo, who apprenticed with Giotto -- an honourable and important legacy in terms of understanding Cennino's methods.[1] This passage reinforces the importance Cennino placed on the workshop as a forum for the exchange of artists' ideas. In the first chapter he tells us of his reasons for penning the handbook: he wishes to write an embellishment to scientific principles and to, "make a note of what was taught me by the aforesaid Agnolo, my master, and of what I have tried out with my own hand."[2] We are presented with lessons from both tradition and from Cennino's own experiences. His workshop background and training produce practical discussions, including how to become an artist, how to make brushes, how to work in a wide variety of media, and most importantly for this discussion, the nature of colours, where to get them, how to mix them, and how to apply them to the chosen surface. Cennino gives us a practical manual for how to become a painter.

It is important in this type of discussion to determine what each author meant by the term "colour" or "*colore*". The idea of colour as paint governs Cennino's definition. At the beginning of his discussion of colours, Cennino gives a brief acknowledgment of an Aristotelian theoretical basis. However, he then continues by listing the colours, not in an Aristotelian scale, but by their availability as pigment.[3] He writes: "Know that there are seven natural colours, or rather, four actually mineral in character, namely black, yellow, and green; three are natural colours, but need to be helped artificially, as lime white, ultramarine or azurite blue, and *giallorino*."[4] Cennino has only a cursory interest in the theory of colours, but examines in detail how colour may be used as paint. His discussion of colours is always connected with materials, and it centres around how to "work up" or mix these colours.[5] He is practical to the point of discussing problems, such as poisonous pigments and

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1 Cennino Cennini, *Il Libro dell' Arte o Trattato della Pittura*, ed. Fernando Tempesti (Milan: Longanesi, 1975), 30; idem, *The Craftsman's Handbook/"Il Libro dell'Arte"*, trans. Daniel V. Thompson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1933; repr., New York: Dover, 1960), 2.

2 Cennino, *Libro*, 30: "*... di quello che a me fu insegnato dal predetto Agnolo mio maestro, nota farò, e di quello che con mia mano ho provato;*" idem, *Handbook*, 2.

3 Martin Kemp, *The Science of Art: optical themes in western art from Brunelleschi to Seurat* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1989), 265.

4 Cennino, *Libro*, 49: "*Sappi che sono sette colori naturali; cioè quattro propri di lor natura terrigna, siccome negro, rosso, giallo e verde: tre sono naturali, ma voglionsi aiutare artifizialmente, come bianco, azzurro oltremarino, o della Magna, e giallorino.*" Idem, *Handbook*, 20-21.

5 Jonas Gavel, "Colour: A Study of its Position in the Art Theory of the Quattro- & Cinquecento," *ACTA Universitatis Stockholmiensis: Stockholm Studies in History of Art*, 32 (1978), 24.

grinding techniques.[6] Once the colours are made, they are then used, as will be discussed below, for modelling in the imitation of nature.

If we wish to look for evidence of an author's writings on art in a painting, it will be perhaps most directly apparent when the author discusses the laying down of pigment on a surface; it is through an examination of each authors' technical directives that we receive some specific characteristics for which to look in a painting. The laying down of pigment is, of course, closely allied with modelling, light, and shadow and therefore, to our contemporary minds, black and white. In Cennino's system, the division between light and colour is more clear cut and the two can be discussed perhaps more fruitfully when separated. Cennino's discussion of the laying down of pigment centres on the representation of drapery.[7] He recommends a system in which different saturations of a hue are used to achieve tonal modelling.[8] In this system, some of the local hue is placed in each of two bowls; one adds a little lime white to one bowl and to the other, a great deal. In a third bowl one places a mixture of the contents of the first two bowls. These three saturations are then used to model the main form of the object; an even lighter version may then be used to put on highlights and pure white may "shape up definitely all the areas of relief".[9] A pure, saturated form of the local colour is then used around the outlines and the dark areas. In this system the darks are defined not by shadow made through the addition of black, but by the most saturated version of the local hue, and pure white defines the lightest parts. It also means that the lightest version of blue, made through the addition of white, may still be darker in tone than a shadowed area of yellow.[10]

Cennino scatters his comments on light, and therefore black and white, throughout his writings on colour. He lists both black and white in his range of colours; he does not consider them as separate entities, nor as merely elements of light and shade, as Alberti and Leonardo do. For Cennino, white acts as the crucial tonal modulator; however, black is conspicuously absent as the creator of shadow, which is represented with the most saturated version of the local hue. Cennino was apparently not able to make the conceptual leap from this use of black and white to an application of this idea as the suggestion of tonal relationships of colours in painting; this type of comment does not carry through into his passages on the uses of colour. We infer from Cennino's system, in which saturated hues are necessarily present, that paintings would display a heightened sense of colour, and that the juxtapositions of

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6 Cennino, *Libro*, 57, 56; idem, *Handbook*, 29, 28.

7 Cennino, *Libro*, 74-77; idem, *Handbook*, 49-52.

8 Kemp, *Science*, 265.

9 Cennino, *Libro*, "... *e va' ritrovando le sommità delle pieghe del relievo*"; idem, *Handbook*, 50.

10 Kemp, *Science*, 265.

these saturated hues would resonate more strongly than in a work in which the addition of black, darkened shadows tone down the hues.

A system of aesthetic comments made by the author presents an attractive possibility for this discussion. Were these comments on personal taste in relation to colour to exist, they would present easily applicable guidelines for discovering authors' influence on painters. None give us a direct list of colours to signify importance when, for example, painting the robes of St. Paul, nor an extensive catalogue of the most beautiful colours and where they should be placed. However, they do make comments along these lines and it is possible to come up with some suggested hues and how they might be used. As regards matters of taste, the application of these comments to works of art must be made carefully and with prudence.

Cennino makes some qualitative comments in his discussion of the mixing of colours. He tells of his first seeing ocher: "I picked out a wrinkle of this colour with a penknife; and I do assure you that I never tried a handsomer, more perfect ocher colour."[11] As is characteristic of Cennino, these comments tend in general to refer to the nature of colours as pigments rather than hues and he does not specifically mention them as beautiful in relation to the depiction of certain forms. He does mention specific colours in relation to particular forms, such as *cinabrese* for flesh but for the most part these comments have no aesthetic bent to them. In his most telling comments regarding taste, Cennino recommends *cangiante* or "shot" colours as a way to enliven a work.[12] These various and disparate comments make difficult the refining of any coherent Cenninian colour aesthetic.

In contrast to Cennino, Leon Battista Alberti's treatises derive from a stronger theoretical tradition and from Alberti's own thoughts and ideas; they are not rooted in a practical, handbook tradition as Cennino's writings. The first of Alberti's treatises, *De Pictura* written in 1435, addressed the humanist intellectuals of the period who would be able to read Latin, while the second, *Della Pittura* from a year later, made his work more accessible to painters, as it was written in Italian.[13] He writes: "I

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11 Cennino, *Libro*, 55: "*... andai col coltellino di dietro cercando alla margine di questo colore; e sì t'imprometto che mai non gustai il più bello e perfetto colore di ocria*"; idem, *Handbook*, 27.

12 Kemp, 265.

13 For the Latin version, see: Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting and On Sculpture*, ed. and trans. Cecil Grayson (London: Phaidon, 1972) and more recently idem, *On Painting*, trans. Cecil Grayson, ed. with intro. Martin Kemp (London: Penguin, 1991). For the Italian, see idem, *Della Pittura*, ed. Luigi Malle (Florence: Sansoni, 1950) and idem, *On Painting*, trans. John R. Spencer (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1966). To avoid confusion, in subsequent notes, these will be referred to as Alberti together with the relevant editor: e.g. Alberti/Kemp. Due to the greater detail in the Latin version and to avoid extensive footnotes,

therefore ask that my work be accepted as the product not of a pure mathematician but only of a painter."[14] Alberti's two versions of *On Painting* tell us both about his interest and background, what he hoped to achieve with each version of the text and therefore how each may be applied. In 1436, he translated the text into Italian (*Della Pittura*), using the vernacular, making the treatise more accessible to artists who would not necessarily have the educational background to read Latin or to understand the classical references contained in some of the Latin passages. The differences between the colour passages in the two versions of the text are the deletion of the more philosophical passages in the Italian and the decreased specificity of the Italian terms; as this topic had never been written about in Italian, Alberti had to find vernacular terms that would approximate the very specific Latin ones, which had been in use for this topic since antiquity. The texts not only make some theoretical breakthroughs for Renaissance art theory, but also foreshadow and aid the development of later technical and theoretical advances.

Unlike Cennino, Alberti bases his definition of the term colour in theory; it centers around colours as they occur and are acted upon by light and shadow in nature -- very different from Cennino's pigment based approach. Alberti discusses colour in both *Book One* and *Book Two* of his treatise but *Book One* gives the most useful comments for Alberti's definition of colour. He begins this section with a brief acknowledgment of the interdependence of black and white, and colour, and then goes on to discuss his colour theory. In *De Pictura* this theoretical section begins with a black-white colour scale based in the philosophical tradition; his scale consists of five colours or hues, varied according to black and white which fall at either end of the scale. He omits this section in *Della Pittura*. In a passage printed in both texts he writes:

> My own view about colours, as a painter, is that from the mixture of colours there arises an almost infinite variety of others, but that for painters there are four true kinds [*genera*] of colours corresponding to the number of the elements, and from these many *species* are produced. There is fire-colour, which they call red, and the colour of air which is said to be blue or blue-gray, and the green of water, and the earth is ash coloured.[15] We see that all other colours, like jasper and porphyry stone, are made from a mixture.[16]

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that text will be given in full, with relevant Italian words added in brackets within the Latin passage.

14 Alberti/Grayson, 36-37: "*Peto igitur nostra non ut puro a mathematico sed veluti a pictore tantum scripta interpretentur.*"

15 This last term has prompted considerable discussion. In both Latin and Italian, it is translated as ashen or ash-coloured; the Latin has "*cinereum*" and the Italian version has "*bigia et cenericcia*": Alberti/Malle, 62. It is difficult to imagine that Alberti, with his humanist education, would not use the proper term for yellow (in reference to pigment he uses *croceos*, or saffron-yellow); and it is equally difficult to imagine, given his extensive understanding of the nature of black and white and therefore, tonality, that he would mistake the colour of earth or ashes as one of the four true, pure colours. Gavel's extensive discussion of this topic (pp. 120-23) centres around Alberti's presumed influence on later writers, and on the Italian term being

Here Alberti sets down a theory of colour quite new for its time. Previous "philosophical" theories, based in Aristotle, maintained that black and white are the only true colours and all colours are made through a mixture of black and white; these other colours are therefore inherently changeable. Alberti now says that there are four true chromatic hues, the so-called *genera*: these are red, blue, green and ash, although they are still based in the four elements rather than any other model. He then goes on to explain how these main *genera*, when mixed with black or white, create the second component of his theory, the tonal *species*.

> So, there are four kinds [*genera*] of colours, of which there are countless species according to the admixture of white and black. For we see verdant leaves gradually lose their greenness until they become white. We also see the same thing with the air, how, when as is often the case, it is suffused around the horizon with whitish mist, it gradually changes back to its true colour. Then, with roses we see too that some are a rich, bright red, others are like the cheeks of maidens, and others resemble pale ivory. The colour of earth also has its *species* according to the mixture of white and black.[17]

Here we understand that while the *genus* red can have black or white added and thus change its tonality or make infinite *species* from it, its inherent "red-ness" cannot be altered.

Alberti's final passage, discussing the behaviour of black and white, summarises and reiterates the main points of this theory:

> The admixture of white, therefore, does not alter the basic kinds [*genus*] of colours, but creates *species*. Black has a similar power, for many *species* of colours arise from the addition of black. This is evident from the effect of shade on colour, for as shade deepens, the clarity [*claritas*] and whiteness [*albedo*] of a colour become less, and when the light increases, the colour becomes clear [*clarescit*] and brighter [*candidior*]. The painter, therefore, may be assured that white and black are not true colours but, one might say, moderators of colours, for the painter will find nothing but white to represent the brightest glow of light and only black for the darkest shadows.[18]

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frequently associated with yellow in subsequent texts. It is also difficult to accept that the Latin would not be equally or more specific. It has been suggested that it is our twentieth-century perception of ashen-earth colour as gray that is wrong, and that perhaps the fifteenth-century Italian understanding of the term might be based in the ochre colour of earth (see Cennino /Thompson, 27).

16 Alberti/Grayson, 46-47: "*Ego quidem ut pictor de coloribus ita sentio permixtionibus colorum alios oriri colores paene infinitos, sed esse apud pictores colorum vera genera pro numero elementorum quattuor, ex quibus plurimae species educantur. Namque est igneus, ut ita loquar, color quem rubeum vocant, tum et aeris qui celestis seu caesius dicitur, aquaeque color viridis; terra vero cinereum habet. Ceteros omnes colores veluti diaspri et porphyrii lapidis ex permixtione factos videmus.*"

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.: "*Non igitur albi permixtio genus* [*generi*] *colorum immutat sed species* [*spetie*] *ipsas creat. Cui quidem persimilem vim niger color habet, nam nigri admixtione multae colorum species*

In this passage Alberti, through the explanation of the power of black and white, shows us a new understanding of how these creators of light and *species* act, the results of which can be later applied to the use of pigments. Alberti uses very specific words for light and dark in the Latin text: with the deepening of shade the colours lose *claritas* -- clarity and brightness -- and *albedo* -- whiteness and when the light increases, each colour becomes clear (*clarescit*) -- again clear and bright -- and *candidior* -- gleaming white. He understands that light and shade will alter not only the intensity of the colour (non-tonal) referred to in the first term, but also the tonality referred to in the second term. He closes by stating that: "Furthermore, you will not find any white or black that does not belong to one or other of the kinds [*genera*] of colours."[19] Because black and white are never to be used alone and are not *genera*, and because they are required in the creation of *species*, they will never be seen unless they are mixed with a *genus*. In *Book One*, Alberti not only moved from the black and white-based to a hue-based colour system, but in defining this system he also used specific terms to denote how these hues are acted upon by light and shade, for the painter, by black and white. This theory and its technical implications are crucial to the development of new methods for artists' representation of forms in relief.

Alberti's comments on the laying down of pigment and modelling closely link theories of colour and light. As we have seen in the passages from *Book One*, Alberti pens an elemental definition of the origin of colours. In *Book Two*, Alberti discusses the three parts of his "*historia*", the third of which is the reception of light; he divides this part into the uses and application of black and white, and the selection of colours. He opens:

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oriuntur, quod quidem pulchre ex umbra qua ipse color alteratur patet, siquidem crescente umbra coloris claritas et albedo deficit [*s'empiono i colori*], *lumine vero insurgente clarescit* [*aperti*] *et fit candidior* [*chiari*]. *Ergo pictori satis persuaderi potest album et nigrum minime esse veros colores sed colorum, ut ita dixerim, alteratores siquidem nihil invenit pictor quo ultimum luminis candorem referat praeter album solomque nigrum quo ultimas tenebras demonstret.*" For the full Italian see Alberti/Malle, 63. *Claritas* can be translated as clear, bright, shining or brilliant, the first two terms of which have specific implications as to the intensity of the colour. *Albedo* and *candidior* both refer to white, however *albedo* has the connotation of dead white, while *candidior* translates as gleaming white. The second two terms refer in Alberti's usage to the tonality of the hue. He uses the two variant Latin words for white to remind us of the effect of light on colour and that with light white will seem to gleam, whereas in shadow white will seem dim and dead.

19 Ibid.: "*Adde his quod album aut nigrum nusquam invenies quod ipsum non sub aliquo genere colorum sit.*"

> We explained that, while the kinds of colours remain the same, they become lighter or darker according to the incidence of lights and shades; that white and black are the colours with which we express lights and shades in painting; and that all the other colours are, as it were, matter to which variations of light and shade can be applied.[20]

Alberti again reminds us of the immutability of the *genera* and again uses words connoting the effect of black and white on both intensity and tonality. In painting, "what the artist must above all desire: [is] that the things he paints should appear in maximum relief."[21] As black and white are used for this: "... to avoid condemnation and earn praise, painters should first of all study carefully the lights and shades and observe that the colour is clearer [*insignior*] and brighter [*illustrior*] on the surface on which the rays of light strike, and that this same colour turns darker [*subfuscus*] where the force of the light gradually grows less."[22] So we know that black and white are the only things which can be used for light and shadow, that light and shadow express relief, the main goal of the painter, and that this of course all has a large effect on the laying down of pigment.

> When you have thoroughly understood them [objects], you may change the colour with a little white applied as sparingly as possible in the appropriate place within the outlines of the surface, and likewise add some black in the place opposite to it. With such balancing, as one might say, of black and white a surface rising in relief becomes still more evident ... Let me relate here some things I have learned from nature. I observed that plane surfaces keep a uniform colour over their whole extent, while spherical and concave vary their colours, and here it is lighter, there darker, and elsewhere a kind of in-between colour.[23]

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20 Ibid., 86-87: "*Nam manentibus colorum generibus, modo apertiores, modo restrictiores colores pro luminum umbrarumque pulsu fieri edocuimus; caeteros vero colores tamquam materiam haberi, quibus luminis et umbrae alterationes adigantur.*" *Apertiores* translates as open or clear, again referring to intensity. *Restrictiores* is defined as restricted, implying perhaps that white is restricted by the shade, harder to perceive; however, this second term is not as clear in meaning.

21 Ibid., 88-89: "*... dabatur quodve artifici in primis optandum est: ut suae res pictae maxime eminere videantur.*"

22 Ibid.: "*... ut vituperatione careant, utque laudem mereantur, in primis lumina et umbrae diligentissime notanda sunt, atque animadvertendum quam in eam superficiem in quam radii luminum feriant, color ipse insignior atque illustrior sit, tum ut dehinc sensim deficiente vi luminum idem color subfuscus reddatur.*" *Insignior* (marked, distinguished) and *illustrior* (clear, bright) perhaps both refer to the intensity as does *subfuscus* (somewhat dimmer, darker). Here, as there is not association with pigments, and therefore lightening with white, he omits the terms with that connotation.

23 Ibid., 88-89: "*Eas demum cum probe tenueris, tum levissimo albo quam parcissime suo loco intra fimbrias colorem alteres, suoque contrario loco pariter nigrum illico adiunges. Nam hac nigri et albi conliberatione, ut ita dicam, surgens prominentia fit perspicacior ... Sed liceat hic nonnulla, quae a natura hausimus, referre. Animadverti quidem ut planae superficies uniformem omni loco sui colorem servent, sphaericae vero et concavae colores variant, nam istic clarior* [*chiaro*]*, illic obscurior* [*obscuro*] *est, alio vero loco medii coloris species servatur* [*in altro luogo mezzo colore*]." For the Italian, see Alberti/Malle, 100. *Clarior*, again clear and bright,

In contrast to its prevalence in Cennino's passage on the laying down of pigment, local hue plays very little role in Alberti's treatment of the same subject. When creating the form, Alberti says the painter should sketch a line down the centre of the form; this line will act as the division between light and shade and therefore black and white. Black and white are each put down right up to this line, so at no point would the colour not be mixed with black or white, and therefore a purely saturated hue presumably would not appear. At one point he refers to "... a species of in-between colour" and later mentions "the colour of the surface" but, particularly in the second case, we are not sure where the most intense version of the hue should appear, if at all. It is certainly unfortunate, and perhaps telling, that his terms here are not as specific as those referring to light and shade. In this type of discussion, a topic as practical as the mixing of pigments seems to have no place. We are told of the application of black and white that they should always be placed in opposition to one another, and that they should never appear in their pure form.

> For the painter has no other means than white to express the brightest gleam of the most polished surfaces, and only black to represent the deepest shadows of the night. And so in painting white clothes we must take one of the four kinds of colours which is bright and clear; and likewise in painting, for instance, a black cloak, we must take the other extreme which is not far from the deepest shadow, such as the colour of the deep and darkening sea.[24]

Perhaps this moderation of black and white, in which neither appears in its pure form, could apply to hue as well. Alberti closes these comments with the statement: "We all by nature love things that are open [*aperta*] and bright [*clara*]," again reinforcing the bipartite theory of the action of black and white on colour.[25]

We learn then that Alberti recommends a gradually blended application of black and white across the surface of the form, and that the application of black and white will control both the intensity and the tonality of the local hue. The lit parts of the painting will be mixed with white, balanced by black in the shadowed areas; *chiaroscuro* has now become the desired effect, replacing Cennino's favoured colouristic effect, and replacing the heightened colour of the Cenninian system with colours moderated by the constant presence of black and white.

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obscurior, dark, indistinct, shadowy. Again, with reference to light in nature alone, Alberti does not use terms with reference to tonality.

24 Ibid., 90-91: "*Nam habet pictor aliud nihil quam album colorem quo ultimos tersissimarum superficierum fulgores imitetur, solumque nigrum invenit quo ultimas noctis tenebras referat. Idcirco in albis vestibus pingendis unum ex quattuor generibus colorum suscipere opus est, quod quidem apertum et clarum sit. Idque ipsum contra in nigro fortassis pallio pingendo alium extremum quod non longe ab umbra distet, veluti profundi et nigrantis maris colorem sumemus.*" *Apertum* (open, clear, unclouded) and *clarum* (clear and bright) both presumably refer to the *genus*.

25 Ibid.: "*Ita natura omnes aperta et clara amamus. Ergo qua in parte facilior peccato via patet, eo arctius obstruenda est.*"

Alberti's discussion of colours themselves follows logically from the preceding treatment of the laying down of black and white. If black and white are to be the creators of form, (as opposed to the tonal values of white in Cennino), then their placement is the important part of technique, and with regards colour, selection and placement of hue is paramount:

> We have spoken so far about the use of white and black. But we must give some account also of the kinds of colours [*generibus*]. So now we shall speak of them, not after the manner of the architect Vitruvius as to where excellent red ochre and the best colours are to be found, but how selected and well compounded colours should be arranged together in a painting.[26]

He also writes: "I should like, as far as possible all the kinds [*genera*] and *species* of colours to appear in painting with a certain grace and amenity."[27] For colour, variety in both hue and tone seem to be the desired goal. He goes on to make specific suggestions for colour selection which will be discussed below in relation to colour aesthetics.

As previously mentioned, Alberti's comments following the laying down of black and white bear relevance for discerning an Albertian colour aesthetic. He has told us before that we all love colours which are open and clear. We are now told how these colours [*genera*] might be used in the *historia*. He favours the use of both *genera* and *species* and continues:

> Such grace will be present when colours are placed next to others with particular care; for, if you are painting Diana leading her band, it is appropriate for this nymph to be given green clothes, the one next to her white, and the next red, and another yellow, and the rest should be dressed successively in a variety of colours, in such a way that light [*clari*] colours are always next to dark [*obscuris*] ones of a different kind [*generis*]. This combining of colours will enhance the attractiveness of the painting by its variety [*varietà*], and its beauty by comparisons. There is a kind of sympathy among colours, whereby their grace and beauty if increased when they are placed side by side. If red stands between blue and green, it somehow enhances their beauty as well as its own. White lends to gaiety, not only when placed between gray and yellow, but almost to any colour. But dark colours acquire a certain dignity when between light colours, and similarly light colours may be placed with good effect among dark. So the painter in his *historia* will arrange this variety of colours I have spoken of.[28]

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26 Ibid.: "*Haec de albi et nigri usu dicta hactenus. De colorum vero generibus etiam ratio quaedam abhibenda est. Sequitur ergo ut de colorum generibus nonnulla referamus, non id quidem quemadmodum Vitruvius architectus quo loco rubrica optima et probatissimi colores inveniantur, sed quonam pacto selecti et valde pertriti colores in pictura compondendi sint.*"

27 Ibid., 90-92: "*Velim genera colorum et species, quoad id fieri possit, omnes in pictura quadam cum gratia et amenitate spectari.*" Vitruvius' comments on colour also hark back to Cennino 's comments on where to find the best vein of ochre.

28 Ibid., 92-93: "*Gratia quidem tunc extabit cum exacta quadam diligentia colores iuxta coloribus aderunt; quod si Dianam agentem chorum pingas, huic nymphae virides, illi propinquae candidos, proximae huic purpureos, alteri croceos amictus dari convenit, ac deinceps istiusmodi*

In the first section Alberti advocates an alternation of *genera* and *species*, then light beside dark, presumably according to *genera* again. He also tells of a "sympathy" between colours in which triads of colours are suggested, the first one of *genera*, the second of *species*. He closes by again recommending light and dark pairings. He advocates a rhythm of colours in which opposites of light and dark and pairings of sympathetic and *genera/species* are used to enhance one another.

While it was Cennino and Alberti in the early to mid-fifteenth century who laid the ground work for a new Renaissance colour theory, it was Leonardo da Vinci who took these ideas and gave them a solid and scientific basis, developing them more fully into a system by which they could be applied to and used fruitfully in painting. The condition of Leonardo's writings as they have survived has a profound effect on the study of his theory. In contrast to previous writers, Leonardo did not complete a finished, coherent treatise on painting; although he planned to eventually write such a work, he never did and at his death left a vast collection of manuscripts and notebooks behind him. These became the property of Francesco Melzi who edited and transcribed a portion of them into the manuscript to which we now refer as the Codex Urbinas.[29] In order to edit and transcribe the material left to him, Melzi sifted through Leonardo's greatly varied writings which included notes to himself, scientific observations, admonitions for other painters, and outlines for future treatises. In addition to its varied formats, Leonardo's work also covers a greater

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colorum diversitate caeterae induantur ut clari semper colores aliquibus diversi generis obscuris coloribus coniungantur. Nam ea quidem coniugatio colorem et venustatem a varietate et pulchritudinem a comparatione illustriorem referet. Atqui est quidem nonnulla inter colores amicitia ut iuncti aler alteri gratiam et venustatem augeat. Rubeus color si inter coelestem et viridem medius insideat, mutuum quoddam utrisque suscitat decus. Niveus quidem color non modo inter cinereum atque croceum positus, sed paene omnibus coloribus hilaritatem praestat. Obscuri autem colores inter claros non sine insigni dignitate assident, parique ratione inter obscuros clari belle collocantur. Ergo quam dixi varietatem colorum in historia pictor disponet."

29 *Leonardo on Painting*, ed. Martin Kemp, selected and trans. Martin Kemp and Margaret Walker (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1989), 1. Primary source references will be listed in order of source of translation followed by manuscript reference. References from the Codex Urbinas are denoted by Urb. followed by the folio number (other less frequently cited manuscripts will be referenced in the body of the footnote; the source for the published facsimile of the Codex Urbinas is: Leonardo da Vinci, *Treatise on Painting [Codex Urbinas Latinas 1270]*, trans. and annot. A. Philip McMahon, II (facsimile), (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956). Quotes from Leonardo's writings in Italian come from McMahon's facsimile which means the spelling is Leonardo's and not necessarily that of contemporary Italian. References to publised and/or translated versions will be as follows: references to *Leonardo on Painting* (see above) will be marked Leonardo/Kemp followed by the selection number rather than the page number and the same for Leonardo/McMahon. In the case of references to commentary, the page number will be given, marked with p. References from *The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*, compiled and ed. Jean Paul Richter, (London: Oxford University Press, 1939) will be marked Leonardo/Richter.

range of topics than earlier authors, including: machines, plants, human anatomy, observations for other painters, water movement and storms. As a partial result of Leonardo's desire to use empirical knowledge to improve the painted image, his writings tend to have a more methodological approach than either Cennino's or Alberti's. Diagrams and proofs accompany many of his observations, giving concrete support to statements that previously would be given as fact, with little or no specific evidence. There tend to be fewer comments on the mechanics of laying down paint and on technique, particularly in comparison to Cennino. Leonardo's observations, rather than being discussions of how to mix paint or create form, examine the nature of the physical world and are often coupled with admonitions and recommendations to the painter; this allows painters to know both the cause of what they see and then how to represent it.

Due to the complexity of Leonardo's ideas, a brief examination of modern interpretations will help to put our current understanding in context. Recent scholarship has focused on exactly what was the aim of Leonardo's treatises; Claire Farago took up where John Shearman left off, and deepened our understanding of the development of Leonardo's purpose.[30] In his 1962 article using visual evidence from Leonardo's paintings, Shearman established the principle of "tonal unity" in relationship to Leonardo's works. Prior to Leonardo, works modelled in colour modelling would have a discrepancy in overall tonal consistency, due to the difference in tonal values between, for example, yellow and blue, the former of which is inherently lighter than the latter. With Leonardo there began to be a drive, based in observable phenomenon, towards representing consistent tonalities, albeit with the loss of a certain fullness of saturation in shadows. This also meant that techniques such as *cangiante* based in technical problems of just this sort of dissonance, were no longer considered strictly appropriate. Claire Farago's extremely rich article of 1991 has added to our understanding of Leonardo's theories relating to colour and fundamentally altered our perception of them.[31] The main point relevant for this investigation relates to the idea that Leonardo advocated that painters "must first understand the *causes* of optical phenomena (e.g. the action of light that causes colours to be reflected), next observe the *effects* they want to imitate in nature, and only then construct a situation that will yield a beautiful composition of colours."[32] Farago discusses the gradual emergence of this idea in Leonardo's work, and credits

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30 See respectively: Claire J. Farago, "Leonardo's Color and Chiaroscuro Reconsidered: The Visual Force of Painted Images," *Art Bulletin*, 73 (March 1991): 63ff and John Shearman, "Leonardo's Colour and Chiaroscuro," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 25 (1962): 13-47.

31 In addition to the article focusing on colour, Claire Farago also refers to some of those ideas in her more recent publication, "Leonardo's *Battle of Anghiari*: A Study in the Exchange between Theory and Practice," *Art Bulletin* 76 (June 1994): 301-30.

32 Farago, "Anghiari": 326.

its apogee as being reached around 1505.[33] She goes on to examine under what conditions Leonardo feels the most beautiful colour will be manifest; she summarises that for Leonardo, colours will be most essentially and most beautifully themselves in brightest light, which unfortunately the pupil cannot tolerate. Therefore colour must be somewhat shadowed to be visible, but with the resultant loss in beauty.[34] While this is certainly a simplification of her arguments, it is important to stress this fundamental change in our view of Leonardesque colour, at least later in his career; for him, colour was not then necessarily dark and dimmed, but would be most pleasing in bright light in fullest saturation. This certainly has relevance for the forthcoming discussion and will reappear in later chapters. For the present, it is important to keep Shearman and Farago's readings in mind throughout the subsequent analysis.

Leonardo's writings on colour theory together with these two analyses provide a good indication of the general state of his ideas as they have come to us; although contradictions and inconsistencies exist, there is an overall trend which can be followed. In line with preceding theorists, Leonardo lists what he considers to be the basic components of colour; his theory centres around simple (*semplici*) and compound (*composti*) colours. He gives two different lists of colours which he considers *semplici*; the first of these lists is basically Aristotelian with a slight change in order.[35]

> The simple colours are [six], of which the first is white, although some philosophers do not accept white or black amongst the number of the colours, because the one is the cause of the colours and the other is the absence of them. However, because the painter cannot do without them, we add them to the number of the others, and we say that, in this order, white is the first among the simple colours, and yellow the second, green the third to them, blue is the fourth, and red is the fifth and black is the sixth. And white is given by light, without which no colour may be seen, yellow by earth, green by water, blue by air and red by fire, and black by darkness ...[36]

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33 Farago, "Color": 71.

34 Ibid., 77.

35 Kemp, *Science*, 266. This change in order allows for the "blueing" of colours in the distance relevant for aerial perspective.

36 Leonardo/Kemp, 157; Urb. 75v-76v. *I Dizionari Sansoni*, ed. Centro Lessicografico Sansoni, dir. Vladimiro Macchi, 2nd ed. (Florence: Sansoni, 1981) lists one definition for *metteremo* as "to apply, for colours." Although this is only one dictionary's definition, it is possible that Leonardo included not only these colours' traditional metaphysical association with the elements, but also their role as the artistic "notations" of these physical things, as he later does for black and white. McMahon, II, 75v-76r: "*I semplici colori sono di qua il primo è il biancho ben che alcuni filisofi non accettino il bianco ne'l nero nel numero de colori perche l'uno è causato de colori et l'altro ne'privatione. Ma pure perche il pittore non puo fare senza questi noi li meteremo nel numero degli altri e diremo il biancho in questo ordine essere il primo ne semplici et il giallo il secondo, e il verde nel terzo, l'azuro nel quarto, e rosso nel quinto, e il nero nel sesto. É*

The simple colours here are the basics of his colour system, which are then used to categorise other colours. Leonardo maintains a balance between the previous approaches to whether or not black and white should be among the "primary" colours. He acknowledges the Aristotelian placement of these two colours among the *semplici* because of their usefulness to painters. However, as did Alberti before him Leonardo is hesitant to include them theoretically, knowing that rather than being colours themselves they are the cause and absence of colours.[37] He links these simple colours with the elements, stressing the usefulness of black and white for the painter by adding them to this elemental list as the equivalents of light and darkness. Later in this same passage Leonardo revises this list by stating that neither blue nor green are "in themselves simple [*semplici*] colours because blue is compounded [*composto*] from light and shade as with the colour of the air which arises from the deepest black and brightest white" and green is made from a simple colour and a compound, blue and yellow.[38] Leonardo only explains why these colours are compound, not why they are no longer considered simple colours; however, with the variety of his lists this disparity, rather than being puzzling, is typical.

In this first passage Leonardo also gives examples of compound [*composti*] colours which are observed, not created, by holding a coloured glass up to a coloured form and observing the new colour resulting from this juxtaposition; this means that the compound colours, in contrast to the simple colours, are infinite in their variety. This method of observing compound colours has both positive and negative aspects in that some may be darkened by blue or black, but enhanced by green or yellow.[39] Leonardo uses this technique for the creation of compound colours fairly consistently; it is one of mixing colours with light, or with glazes or transparent films, and not with actual opaque pigments. He later writes "when a transparent colour lies over another colour differing from it, a compound colour is composed which differs from each of the simple colours from which it is compounded.[40] In these passages, Leonardo has made a large theoretical advance from Cennino's physical, practical mixing of pigments, through Alberti's creating of the tonal *species* of colours via the addition of

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il biancho metermo per la luce senza la quale nesun colore vedere si puo, e il giallo per la terra, il verde per l'acqua, e l'azuro per l'aria e il rosso per il fuoco, e il nero per le tenebre ..."

37 Leonardo understands light and shadow as Albertian tonal modulators (creaters of *species*) but also as the representation of light and shadow (see above, *meteremo per*). This will be more fully discussed in the section on light and shade. Also, cf. Leonardo/Richter, 278 -- white is not a colour but the neutral recipient of every colour.

38 Leonardo/Kemp, 157; Urb. 76v: "*Non è per sè semplice, perchè l'azzurro è composto di luce e di tenebre, com'è quell dell'aria, cioè nero perfettissimo e bianco candidissimo.*"

39 Leonardo/Kemp, 157; Urb. 76r.

40 Leonardo/Kemp, 158; Urb. 67r: "*Quando un colore trasparente sopra un'altro colore variato da lui li' si compone un colore misto diverso da ciascuno de semplici che lo composcono.*"

black and white, to his own theory that compound colours can be created infinitely, through the mixing of two hues rather than of a hue with black and white.

The second list of simple colours is an expanded one, given again under the context of mixing colours:

> I call simple colours those which are not compounded and cannot be compounded by means of a mixture of other colours ... After black and white come blue and yellow, then green and tan, that is to say, tawny, or if you wish to say ochre, and then deep purple and red. These are the eight colours and there are no more in nature, and with these I begin the process of mixing, first with black and white, and then with black and yellow, black and red, then yellow and black, yellow and red [and so on].[41]

Simple colours in this section are the building blocks of mixing, the elements from which other colours can be created. Simple colours here are not and cannot be compounded or made, in nature echoing Alberti's immutable *genere*, although here perhaps with a nod to pigment sources. Although Leonardo eventually lists black and white among the simple colours, he begins by saying that they are not listed among the colours because one is darkness and the other light, or one is the deprivation and the other the production of light; he does not want to leave them out because they are crucial for the painter -- the principles by which the painter makes light and shade. He gives the theoretical method, but not the actual technique in which he mixes *semplici* to get *composti*. And again, he goes beyond the addition of black or white to get the compounds as was the case with Alberti by including yellow and red.

In these passages we have the idea that Leonardo understands the ability to get new hues from the mixture of two others. White and black are now solely creators of light and shade and do not have the crucial role they had in Alberti. They model the form and make tonal changes, but they are no longer the building blocks of other colours. In this role of creators of light and shade, they move to a new and higher importance for Leonardo.

Leonardo's ideas on light and shade are crucial to understanding his innovations in the use of colour. Of painting he writes that posture [*atitudine*] is "the first and most noble aspect of figure painting," relief [*rilievo*] the second, good design [*bon disegno*] [sic] third and fine colouring [*bel colorito*] comes fourth in his

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41 Leonardo/Kemp, 161; Urb. 68r-v: "*Colori semplici cimando quelli che non sono composti ne si posson comporre per via di mistione d'altri colori ... Dopo nero e il bianco seguita azzurro e giallo, poi il verde, e il leonino cioè tanteo o dire oguria, di poi il morello et il rosso. Et questi sono otto colori e più non sono in natura. De quali io comincio la mistione e sia primo nero e bianco, dipoi nero e giallo e nero e rosso, di poi giallo e nero, giallo e rosso ...*" Professor Kemp has also suggested that this particular list may well be related to earthy mineral pigments creating a group of colours based on materials, which would tie in well with his closing the passage by discussing physical mixing. The reasons for the addition of tan/tawny/ochre are difficult to specify. None of these terms are defined in dictionaries making the discernment of Leonardo's intentions difficult.

hierarchy.[42] He later writes that "lights and darks, together with foreshortening, comprise the excellence of the science of painting."[43] From these passages we have a general understanding both of the place that light, shade and therefore relief hold in relation to colour and of the necessity of grasping Leonardo's ideas on these topics.

Leonardo's system of light and shade is a complex one and it is helpful initially to understand his terminology. For shadow or shade, he generally uses the term *ombra*, although *oscurita*, *scuro* [dark] and *tenebre* [darkness] also appear. Leonardo further subdivides shadows into different types: original and derivative. He defines original shadows as the "loss of varying quantities of luminous rays" which "clothe the bodies to which they are attached" and describes them as "unique and single and never varied."[44] Derivative shadows are more complex in nature and therefore in definition: they are "shadowy rays which are transmitted throughout the air, and these are of a quality corresponding to the variety of the original shadows from which they are derived;"[45] they are those which are "dispatched from shaded bodies and flow through the air" and are mixed with reflected rays and reflected colours.[46] In nature they are powerful at the beginning and feeble at the end.[47] This refers to what we would describe as cast shadows. However, as is usual with Leonardo's writings, in addition to these two main categories, further types are also mentioned, albeit with less frequency. In his writings on shadow, Leonardo has advanced it beyond the mere absence of light to being a complex combination of varying actions containing elements as diverse as complete darkness and reflected colour.[48]

For light the terms become more complicated. Here he generally follows the concepts, originating in medieval optics, of *luce* and *lume*. *Luce* traditionally refers to

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42 Urb. 130v. "*L'attitudine è la prima parte più nobile della figura ...*"

43 Leonardo/Kemp, 230; Urb. 196r-v: "*Il chiaro et lo scuro insieme co' li scorti è la eccellenzia della scienza della pittura.*"

44 For the first quote: Leonardo/Kemp, 259; Leonardo/Richter, 111; Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Codice Atlantico: CA250a (CA): "*... perchè da varie quantità di razzi luminosi ...*" and "*che vestono i corpi cover appiccate ...*" Leonardo also refers to these shadows as primative (Leonardo/Kemp, 262 and Leonardo/Richter 123; Leonardo/Kemp, 270, Urb. 176r and Leonardo/Kemp, 271, Urb. 184v) or integral (Leonardo/Kemp, 264 and Urb. 187r) in other passages. The definition seems to remain essentially the same. For the second quote, see: Leonardo/Kemp, 263; Urb. 179r in which Leonardo uses the term "primative."

45 Leonardo/Kemp, 259, Leonardo/Richter 111; CA 250a: "*... razzi ombrosi i quali si vanno dilatando per l'aria e sono di tante qualità, quante sono le varietà dell'ombre originali, donde essi derivano.*"

46 Leonardo/Kemp, 262, Leonardo/Richter, 123; BN 2038, 14v: "*Ombra derivativa è quella che si spicca da corpi ombrosi e scorre per l'aria.*"

47 Leonardo/Kemp, 270, Urb. 176r. In Leonardo/Richter, 121 we further learn that shadow [ombra] is the diminution of both light [*lucie*] [sic] and dark [*tenebre*].

48 There is also an interesting though small series of comments on the supremacy of dark over light. Leonardo/Kemp, 157, Urb. 76r; Leonardo/Kemp, 207, Urb. 70v and Leonardo/Richter, 119 all speak of shadow, or black, being unable to overcome red, or fire and that shadow is of greater power than light.

the source of light, such as a candle, while *lume* are the rays of light which *luce* transmits and are received on the body.[49] The distinction between these two terms is not always clear; however Leonardo does use each in what seems to be a different way. He also includes *lustro*, which he defines as the reflection of *luce*, and as being stronger than *lume*;[50] it is "the bright highlight on shiny surfaces, which, unlike the general pattern of light and shade, moves with the eye of the observer."[51] As discussed above, the lighting conditions which produce *lustro* coincide with those which produce the most beautiful colours. This codification of the different types and actions of light allows Leonardo to develop his observations of how each type of light behaves in nature into how they may then be manipulated by the painter to obtain his or her goals. As with shadow, Leonardo gives light further divisions according to its behaviour as observed in nature:

> The lights [*lumi*] which illuminate opaque bodies are of four kinds; that is to say, universal, like that of air which lies within our horizon; and specific, like that of the sun or a window or a door or other source; the third is reflected light; the fourth is that which passes through translucent things like linen or paper or similar things ... [52]

In another passage, Leonardo writes of separate light, which falls on a body, and inseparable light, which is the side of a body that is illuminated by separate light.[53] There is also diffused, or fully illuminated light, which is paired with restricted light -- that which appears through windows and only illuminates one side.[54] These passages show, as with shadow, Leonardo's advanced understanding of the variety of which light is capable. Universal light especially becomes important later in his treatment of atmosphere and convincing creation of forms in space.

In addition to these fairly complex definitions and refinements Leonardo also gives detailed observations on how light and shade behave in nature. It is especially through these comments that he makes clear his perception of how to represent the world he sees, and creates the atmosphere in which the forms the painter chooses to represent will be placed. He writes:

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49 Leonardo/Kemp, p. 313

50 Ibid., 250-1; Urb. 195r.

51 Leonardo/Kemp, p. 313.

52 Leonardo/Kemp, 235; Urb. 195r: "*I lumi che aluminano li corpi opachi sono di iiii [4] sorti, cioè universale com'è quello de l'aria ch'è dentro al nostro orizonte. E particulare come quello del sole o d'una finestra, o porta, o altro spazio; el terzo è il lume reflesso; quarto è il quale passa per cose trasparenti come tela o carta e simili ...*"

53 Leonardo/Richter, 126; BrM 171a.

54 Leonardo/Richter, 127; BrM 170b.

> Shadows and lights are the most certain means by which the shape of any body comes to be known, because a colour of equal lightness or darkness will not display any relief but gives the effect of a flat surface which, with all its parts at equal distance, will seem equally distant from the brightness that illuminates it.[55]

The importance here of the respective roles of light and shade, and colour, in creating a form cannot be overestimated. The technical implications of this system when compared with the Cenninian system of modelling by hue are the focus of Leonardesque advances in colour theory and technique. In another passage he writes that the outline and form in light and shade are indistinct in shadows and highlights, that it is only in between that they are conspicuous.[56] It is from the interaction of light and shade that the form emerges and he tells us "that part of an illuminated object will be more illuminated that is closest to the origin of its light."[57] From this passage we understood where the most illuminated parts of the object will be, and are given a rationale, albeit implicit, as to where to place the most brightly lit areas of the form. In his general observations on light, Leonardo has introduced the idea of reflected light, which plays perhaps the most crucial role in terms of Leonardo's formulation of atmosphere in painting. In a passage summarising types of shadows he writes that reflected rays modify the original shadow with "various colours corresponding to the various places from which these luminous reflected rays derive."[58] We learn also that an intermediate shadows "colours the surfaces of opaque bodies ... and contains within itself the reflected light."[59] Bodies are then seen to be surrounded by reflected light which fills the shadows with both reflected colour and reflected light. It is therefore no longer enough for the painter to create a form with proper shadows placed according to where the drapery folds, but rather the conditions in which the body rests must be taken fully into consideration now as well.

The nature of Leonardo's observations on this topic show that he has made detailed studies of light and shadow and how they behave in various settings. It is imagined, from his comments on the set-up of a studio, that Leonardo placed objects in various environments and recorded how they looked in all aspects -- not merely the

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55 Leonardo/Kemp, 231; Urb. 208v: "*L'ombre et li lumi sono certissima causa a fare conoscere le figure di qualunche corpo perche un colore d'equale chiarezza o oscurità non puo dimostrare il suo rilievo, ma fa uficcio di superficie piana, la qual con egual distanzia con tutte le sue parte sia egualmente distante allo splendore che l'alumina.*"

56 Leonardo/Richter, 155; G 32a (Paris, Institut de France).

57 Leonardo/Kemp, 241; Leonardo/Richter, 151; CA132vb/365v: "*Quella parte della cosa alluminata sarà più luminosa, la qual sia più vicina alla causa del' suo lume.*"

58 Leonardo/Kemp, 259; Leonardo/Richter, 111; CA250a: " *... di tanti vari colori quanto sie varie i lochi onde essi reflessi razzi luminsi derivano.*"

59 Leonardo/Kemp, 267; Urb. 199r: " *... tinge le superficie de corpi ombrosi ... e si contiene dentro il riflesso.*"

study of a draped figure.[60] They are not theoretical comments which arise from a Humanist/classical education, nor practical guidelines for a would-be painter, but rather in-depth scientific observations which are then assessed and often applied to the practice of the painters' art. This type of observation naturally results in an understanding of the creation of a realistically lit atmosphere which then governs theoretical advances as well as painting style. Yet it is important to remember Farago's reading also, that once this environment is understood the artist then manipulates it, choosing the placement and colours of objects so that they will be accurate but also beautiful.

Now that the basics of the structure of light and shade are understood, the way colour behaves under this system can be examined. Leonardo posited a system of light and shadow from which colour emerges or disappears according to its placement.[61] The creation of form is analogous to the placement of light and shade, and forms already extant are given colour, rather than being created from colour as was the case with Cennino. Leonardo discusses the interaction between light and shade, and colour, in quite specific terms, and there are a few very revealing passages.

> Since we see that the quality of colour is revealed by means of light, it is to be deduced that where there is more light will be seen more of the true quality of the illuminated colour; and where there is more shadow, the colour will be tinged with this shadow. Hence, painter, remember to display the true qualities of colour in the illuminated parts.[62]

He explains here the action of light and shade on colours; they are shown in their true nature in the light, and darkened by the shadows which fall on them as a result of the absence of light. This is further revealed in another passage:

> Just as all the colours are tinged with the darkness of the shadows of night, so the shadow of any colour ends in that darkness. Therefore, painter, do not make it the practice that in your final shadows you are able to discern the colours which border on one another.[63]

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60 For studio environment, see: Leonardo/Kemp, 553 (Leonardo/Richter 515), Urb. 40r; Leonardo/Kemp 554, Urb. 137r-v; Leonardo/Kemp, 555 (Leonardo/Richter 520), Urb. 51r; Leonardo/Kemp 558 (Leonardo/Richter, 512); Paris Institut de France (MS Ashburnham III) BN 2038 24r.

61 Shearman, 13-47.

62 Leonardo/Kemp, 162; Urb. 67v: "*Se noi vediamo la qualita de colori essere conossinta mediante il lume e da giudicare che dov'è più lume guinti si veggia più la vera qualita del colore alluminato; et dov'è più tenebre il colore tingiersi nel colore d'esse tenebre, adongue pittore ricordati di mostrare la verita di colore in sue parte alluminato.*" Here the revelation of colours is not due to the source, but rather due to the fall of light on an object. *Tenebre*, or darkness, applies an atmospheric shrouding of the object.

63 Leonardo/Kemp, 172; Urb. 206v: "*Si come tutti li colori si tingono nell'oscurita delle tenebre della notte, cosi l'ombre ai qualunche colore finisce in esse tenebre. Adongue tu pittore non osservare che nelle ultime tue oscurita s'abbia a conoscere li colore che confiano.*" There are a variety of passages which repeat this idea of colours obscured by darkness.

He also writes: "Do not give a finished or sharply bounded effect to those shadows which you make out with difficulty and those boundaries you cannot discern -- or indeed which you are uncertain about selecting and transferring to your work -- lest you work look wooden as a result."[64] Colours are best revealed then in the areas of fullest light and are in turn lost in shadows; in fact the painter should, if they choose to depict shadows, ensure that the colours are indiscernible in those areas. We are further told that all shadows are tinged with the colour of the light which casts them.[65] Conversely, we are also told that colours in shadows [*ombre*] will vary in brilliance [*bellezza*] according to the depth of the shadow [*oscurita*].[66] Following these propositions, we naturally return to Claire Farago's already discussed analysis of Leonardo's opinion as to under what conditions colour should best be seen (those which produce *lustro*). All these various issues when placed within the framework of light and shade, help to create the atmosphere in which objects are placed and interact. One of the important implications of Farago's reading -- to which we will return in the analyses of paintings in later chapters -- is that Leonardo did not necessarily advocate the dark, shadow-obscured images that we necessarily assume he did, and that at least later in his career he suggested the manipulation of atmosphere to allow the most beautiful, bright, true colours to come through.

This type of reading leads to Leonardo's comments on colour aesthetics which need to be teased out of other more traditionally scientific passages. These comments also tend to focus on choices with which the painter is faced when selecting which colour to place where in their work. We have already seen that the true and most beautiful version of a colour is revealed in well-lit areas of a work. In a further passage, Leonardo writes:

> It must be noted in what situation the same colour looks most beautiful in nature ... Black possesses beauty in shadow, and white in light, and blue and green and tawny in middle shadow, and yellow and red in light, and gold in reflected light, and lake in middle shadow.[67]

Therefore, Leonardo gives guidelines as to where to place the coloured form in the composition, depending on in what area and depth of shadow it will be. He

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64 Leonardo/Kemp, 547; Urb. 50v; BN2038, 14v: "*L'ombre le quali tu discerni con dificolta e i loro termini non puoi conoscere -- anzi con confuso giuditio lo pigli e trasferrissi nella tua opera -- non le farai finite overo terminate chella tua opera sia di legnosa risultatione.*"

65 Leonardo/Kemp, 176; Leonardo/Richter, 272, CA45ra/124v.

66 Leonardo/Richter, 286; Paris, Institut de France, MSS E18a.

67 Leonardo/Kemp, 163, Urb. 67r: "*Qui è da nottare quel parte d'un medesimo si mostra più bello in natura ... Il nero haver la bellezza nell'ombre, et il bianco nel lume, et l'azzurro e verde e taneto nell'ombre mezzane, e l'giallo, e rosso nè lumi, e l'oro ne refflesi et la laca, nell'ombre mezzane.*"

additionally uses a pigment term at the close, lake, implying that these refer not only to hues but to the actual application of paint. He also writes of the beauty of the pairings of certain colours, as did Alberti before him:

> Of colours of equal whiteness that will look brightest which is against the darkest background. And black will display itself at its darkest against a background of greatest whiteness. And red will look most fierce against the yellowest background, and accordingly all the colours will do this surrounded by their directly contrary colour.[68] A direct contrary is a pale colour with red, black with white (although neither of these is a colour), blue with a yellow such as gold, green and red.[69] The colours which go well together are green with red or purple or mauve, and yellow with blue.[70]

In addition to its aesthetic element, Leonardo's description also has a typically scientific slant. Because of their theoretical relationship to one another, these pairs of colours have an inherent, immutable beauty. While Leonardo's definition, by example, of direct contraries is not one of his most scientific in nature, his pairings, whether they be according to beauty or their best companion are consistent. While the pairings do not seem to have a solid theoretical base, and his justifications for them range from pure science to aesthetics, we understand that he is conscious of colours enhancing and heightening one another, and that whiteness or clarity is an important element as well.

In addition to our traditional understanding of Leonardo as the keen and objective observer and recorder of rules of perception, another side of his work has come to the fore recently which sets him clearly against the tradition to be traced in the following chapters. In the 1490s, Leonardo began to investigate phenomena which went against the somewhat rigid laws of optics set down by Alberti and his predecessors and in fact by Leonardo himself in earlier work. These so-called "errors of sight" show Leonardo to be sensitive to inconsistencies and anomalies which, although not inconsistent with previous theory, would nonetheless allow his work to more closely replicate the visual experience. Leonardo betrayed an interest in fleeting, changing variables in nature, particularly when discussing viewing the countryside. As an example:

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68 Leonardo/Kemp, 166; Leonardo/Richter 280; CA 184vc/505v.

69 Leonardo/Kemp, 167; Urb. 77r.

70 Leonardo/Kemp, 168; Urb. 75v: "*De colori d'equal bianchezza quel si mostrerà più candido che sarà in campo più oscuro. E l'nero si mostrerà più tenebroso che sia in campo di maggior bianchezza. E l'rosso di dimostrerà più focoso che sarà in campo più giallo, e così fara tutti li colori circundati da loro retti contrari colori. ... Retto contrari è il palido co'l rosso, il nero col bianco, benche ne' l'uno ne l'altro sia colore, azuro, e giallo, com'è oro verde e rosso. ... I colori che si convengono insieme, cio'è il verde col rosso o paghonazzo o biffa e il gialo col azuro.*"

> Trees and meadows appear much brighter when viewed along the path of the wind rather than towards its place of origin, and this comes about because each leaf is paler on its reverse side than on its upper, and someone who looks straight down the path of the wind sees each leaf reversed.[71]

In a series of passages, Leonardo explores the way in which effects of light in nature create changes in the way in which we see things. This kind of "impressionism" stands in stark contrast to the form- and relief-based and form-driven colour style which will be seen to be typical of Florentine artists during this very period.[72] For now we must wait until the relevant artists' work has been discussed to examine what kind of impact Leonardo's words and works had on his contemporaries.

In his 1992 article, Kemp outlines four types of errors, two of which have direct bearing on the subject at hand: simultaneous contrasts of light and shade; and the theory of contrasting or mutually enhancing colours.[73] For example: "That part of white will appear most pure that most closely borders upon black. That part of black appears darkest that is closest to white, and correspondingly will appear to lack darkness the more remote it is from this white."[74] And by extension that if a dark body is seen in front of a light, the edges of that dark body will be eaten away by the bright illumination: "This is shown when the sun is behind trees without leaves, in which all their branches are situated against the body of the sun are so diminished that they remain invisible. The same happens when a rod is interposed between the eye and the body of the sun."[75] These sorts of observations regarding subjective effects of vision show Leonardo's interest in vision and the way things we see must be represented in painting which goes far beyond the interests of his contemporaries to be studied herein, particularly artists such as Ghirlandaio. While it will be seen that these artists sometimes betray a passing knowledge, whether direct or indirect, of Leonardo's ideas, their work never reveals the kind of loyalty to observable effects that his does.

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71 Leonardo/Kemp 489; Urb. 266r-v: "*Molto piu chiari paiono li alberi et prati riguardando quelli di dietro alla fugha del vento, che in verso il suo anenimento, et questo nasce che ciascuna foglia è piu palida da riverscio che dal suo diritto et che le guarda dirietro alla fugha del vento le vede da riverscio.*" See Leonardo/Kemp, 423-497 for Leonardo's extensive comments on these sorts of effects.

72 Martin Kemp first made this description as "impressionism" in a written note to the author.

73 These have been discussed thoroughly by Martin Kemp in his article: "In the Beholder's Eye: Leonardo and the "Errors of Sight" in Theory and Practice," *Accademia Leonardi Vinci* 5 (1992). I should like to thank Prof. Kemp for making his manuscript available to me prior to publication.

74 Leonardo/Kemp, 169; Urb. 77v: "*Quella parte del biancho parrà piu candida che sia piu presso al confine del nero e cosi parra ne bianche che sara piu remota da esso scuro.*"

75 Leonardo/Kemp, 149; Urb. 142v-143r: "*Questo s'insegna il solo veduto di rietro alla piante senza foglie che tutte le sue ramificationi che si ritrovano a viscontro del corpo solare sono tanto diminuite ch'elle restano insibili. Il simile sara un'aste interposta infra l'occhio et il corpo solare.*"

This latter idea of the simultaneous contrast of light and shade leads to a broader concept in vogue during the sixteenth century, that of *contrapposto*. David Summer's analysis of the term and its various manifestations provides an in-depth and insightful examination, with direct applications for the use of light and shade, and colour, which should be kept in mind throughout the subsequent chapters.[76] He discusses *chiaroscuro* as a kind of *contrapposto* and more importantly, the implications of *contrapposto* for colour use: "Aside from *chiaroscuro*, opposition [*contrapposto*] supplied an elastic formula for the treatment of colour which, however much modified from writer to writer, prevailed through many repetitions."[77] He discusses the use of colours placed in opposition, rather than subtly blended colours, as playing an ornamental role in painting; this concept begins with Alberti and continues through other writers, being used as a compositional tool. After Alberti, writers such as Dolce and Vasari connect this kind of colour use with creating relief and distance.[78] These comments also tie in with many of the types of aesthetic comments made by the theories discussed above, in arranging colours set one against the other so that formal theory and aesthetics overlap in this compositional technique. Although *contrapposto* traditionally is thought of as a figural device, it is important to keep this connection with colour in mind throughout the following chapters.

While these theoretical passages and ways of conceiving of colour are vital to the material covered in the following chapters, the main focus will and must be on the way artists thought of and used colour. In the case of the former, we have very little evidence as none of the artists covered were involved in writing on colour. In the case of the latter, we have their paintings. Each image provides a concrete record of the artists approach to materials, to the laying down of paint, to creating beauty through colour, and to expression through colour. These various painters would likely have been aware of the various theories, but the only concrete indication of this and of their reaction to those theories is the paintings themselves. And it is to that topic that our attention must now turn.

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76 David Summers, "Contrapposto: Style and Meaning in Renaissance Art," *Art Bulletin* 59 (1977): 336-361.

77 For the discussion of *chiaroscuro* see ibid., 350-52 and for colour, 353-54. For the quote, see 353.

78 For the Dolce quote see Summers: 353, that through light and dark "a mean is found, that unites one contrary with another and makes the figures seem round, and more or less distant according to need." And Vasari on the same page: "All paintings then ... ought to be made so united in their colors , that those figures in *istorie* which are most important are done *chiare chaire*; draperies of semi-dark should be placed behind those more forward ... indeed, little by little, as figures diminish inwards, they become also equally darker by degrees, both in color of flesh and clothing."

CHAPTER Two

DOMENICO GHIRLANDAIO

Ghirlandaio marks a starting point for this topic for a variety of reasons. His stature as one of the most preeminent and popular artists of the late fifteenth century makes him a crucial figure for the discussion of any inherently Florentine developments in the subsequent sixteenth century. Additionally, because he acted as Michelangelo's master we cannot overlook Ghirlandaio's painting style or the type of training which his pupil would have received, as both aspects would play formative roles in the younger artist's highly influential painting style.[1] As evidence of this linkage, Ghirlandaio's workshop practice and drawings show strong connections with Michelangelo's two-dimensional work. The work Domenico was doing while Michelangelo was with him -- the Tornabuoni chapel in Santa Maria Novella -- will also be examined. Furthermore, it is necessary to know to what extent Ghirlandaio was himself innovative, and to explore connections between Filippino Lippi's work of the late 1480s and Ghirlandaio's of the same time. These connections raise important issues regarding Ghirlandaio and colour in late fifteenth century Florence. After establishing this foundation, it will then be possible to move on to a more fruitful examination of colour in Michelangelo's paintings.

Despite the often cool response to his work by scholars -- which fortunately is warming in recent years -- we must acknowledge that Ghirlandaio played a major role in the development of painting in the late fifteenth century in Florence. First, during the last ten years of his life, Domenico Ghirlandaio ran the biggest workshop in Florence, and as such would have set the popular (and most lucrative) colour style of the time. Second, as a result of the size and importance of his workshop he would have trained a great number of apprentices in this style; among these apprentices were not only Michelangelo but also his famed companion, Granacci, and some of

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1 On Michelangelo's apprenticeship with Ghirlandaio see for example: Jean K. Cadogan, "Michelangelo in the workshop of Domenico Ghirlandaio," *Burlington Magazine* 135 (January, 1993): 30-31; Vasari/Barocchi, 6:5-11 and Vasari/Bull, 1:327-9; Everett Fahy, "Michelangelo and Ghirlandaio," in *Studies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Painting in Honor of Millard Meiss*, Irving Lavin and John Plummer, eds. 2 vols. (New York: New York University Press, 1977), 155; Jill Dunkerton, "Michelangelo as a Painter on Panel," in Michael Hirst & Jill Dunkerton, *The Young Michelangelo*, ex. cat. (London: National Gallery, 1994), 83-88 and Michael Hirst, "The Sculptor of the *Sleeping Cupid*," in Hirst & Dunkerton, 13ff.

Michelangelo's assistants in his early work at the Sistine Chapel.[2] Third, as will be examined later in the chapter, Ghirlandaio had a strong link with the Lippi workshop, and particularly the younger son, Filippino.[3]

The previous points demonstrate to us that Ghirlandaio was not seen during his time, as he tends to have been until recently, as a painter of little repute, interested in "prosaic naturalism," but rather as an artist with a broad scope of influence and a wide circle of not only apprentices but also admirers.[4] Vasari supports this fact introducing Ghirlandaio as an artist "naturally inclined towards genius" and writes that Ghirlandaio made art and nature amazed and full of admiration. He continues that the painter "was gifted by Nature with a perfect spirit and marvellous taste and judgement in painting."[5] About the *Massacre of the Innocents* from the Tornabuoni Chapel, Vasari writes that anyone who sees the effects therein will know without a doubt that this master was in that time excellent. He describes the whole chapel as "a beautiful thing, great, graceful and elegant."[6] Vasari's praise of Ghirlandaio should not be overemphasised given the author's taste for rhetoric; however, his comment that Ghirlandaio was excellent at that time does seem to refute the idea that he was "old-fashioned" or *retardataire*. Certainly his much commented upon representations of famous Florentines -- the cause for his merit being seen as deriving only from his portrayal of fifteenth-century Florentine daily life -- betray an interest in portraiture

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2 On Michelangelo's assistants, see William E. Wallace, "Michelangelo's Assistants in the Sistine Chapel," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 110 (December 1987): 205ff. Four of the thirteen known assistants were known from Ghirlandaio's shop: Giuliano Bugiardini, Francesco Granacci, L'Indaco Vecchio and Jacopo di Sandro. They were all with Ghirlandaio during his work in Santa Maria Novella. Granacci, in his work with Andrea and more importantly Pontormo on the Borgherini bed, would have provided another link between the Ghirlandaio/Michelangelo school and the Andrea school; see Allan Braham, "The Bed of Pierfrancesco Borgherini," *Burlington Magazine* 121 (1979): 754-765.

3 Vasari also mentions Raphael's friendship with Ridolfo Ghirlandaio, establishing another sixteenth-century artist interested in the work of the Ghirlandaio workshop. See Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite de' piu eccellenti* ... eds. , Rosanna Bettari and Paola Barocchi, 6 vols. (Florence: Sansoni, 1966-), 4:160; for the English see: idem, *Lives of the Artists*, transl. George Bull, 2 vols. (New York, 1965), 1:287, hereafter Vasari/Barocchi and Vasari/Bull respectively. John Shearman asserts also that Raphael might have seen and drawn from the *Codex* during this time of friendship with Ridolfo and contact with the Ghirlandaio workshop. See John Shearman, "Raphael, Rome, and the *Codex Escurialensis*," *Master Drawings* 15 (August, 1977): 130

4 *The Oxford Companion to Art*, ed. Harold Osborne (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), 474 describes his work as "a popularization of the then old-fashioned styles of Masaccio and Filippo Lippi" and as "prosaic naturalism"; the author underlines the fact that in his view Ghirlandaio received "few commissions from cultivated or aristocratic patrons." Much earlier, Crowe and Cavalcaselle compare the life of Ghirlandaio to that of Giotto as "one of the great landmarks in the history of Florentine art;" see J.A. Crowe & G.B. Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in Italy: Umbria, Florence and Siena from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, 6 vols. (London: J. Murray, 1903-14), 4:307. Fortunately thanks to scholars such as Francis Ames-Lewis and Jean Cadogan, Ghirlandaio's reputation and importance are on the increase.

5 "... *essendo egli dotato dalla natura d'uno spirito perfetto e d'un gusto mirabile e giudicioso nella pittura...*": Vasari/Barocchi, 3:476.

6 "... *cosa bellissima, grande, garbata e vaga.*" Vasari/Barocchi, 3:487 and for Vasari's description of the chapel, 3:490.

and realism; however, this is no greater than the similar affinity for depictions of everyday life in the work of contemporary northern european artists, who were lauded and indeed studied by the Florentines for the same approach. As evidence of his interest in exploring this type of northern artistic style, it has been suggested that by the late 1480s, Ghirlandaio's workshop held copies of German engravings.[7] Certainly, given the influx into Florence of northern art during this time and the fascination with it, Ghirlandaio's interest in northern art certainly does not make him out to be out of step with his times. It rather places Ghirlandaio in a position of great prominence and importance for late fifteenth and early sixteenth century painting, and it is from this vantage point that the present discussion can begin.

Ghirlandaio's workshop drawings have received a greater degree of attention over the last ten or twelve years. Two types in particular have been examined: drapery "pattern"-drawings and linen drapery studies.[8] The drapery "pattern"-drawings as Ames-Lewis explains, were used by apprentices in the workshop as a way of studying techniques for representing drapery and would also be reused for general ideas (as opposed to acting as models) for workshop productions; from their copying of these drawings apprentices would not only learn about draughtsmanship, but would also thus acquire the master's or the *bottega* style. Through this type of drawing, Michelangelo would have and indeed did learn the typical pen and ink cross-hatching, introduced by Ghirlandaio and found in many of his pupil's early drawings;[9] Ames-Lewis deals with the possibility that Ghirlandaio may have learned this style while an apprentice with Fra Filippo Lippi from 1459-60; this link will be more important later in the chapter.[10]

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7 On this relationship, see Francis Ames-Lewis, "On Domenico Ghirlandaio's Responsiveness to North European Art," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 114 (October, 1989): 111ff in which the author discusses Ghirlandaio's reaction to artists such as Jan van Eyck, Hans Memling and Martin Schongauer; he suggests that Ghirlandaio's workshops held a variety of Northern engravings by the late 1480s (see 114 and n. 15).

8 See Francis Ames-Lewis, "Drapery "Pattern"-Drawings in Ghirlandaio's Workshop and Ghirlandaio's Early Apprenticeship," *Art Bulletin* 63 (March 1981): 49ff; Jean K. Cadogan, "Linen drapery studies by Verrocchio, Leonardo and Ghirlandaio," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 46 (1983): 27ff; Jean K. Cadogan, "Drawings by Domenico Ghirlandaio" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1978).

9 For example, the Albertina studies of three standing figures (Vienna, Albertina, S.R., 150r; Charles De Tolnay, *Corpus dei Disegni di Michelangelo*, 4 vols. (Novara: Istituto Geografico De Agostini, 1975), 5r - hereafter De Tolnay/*Corpus*), and a kneeling Figure (Vienna, Albertina, S.R., 150v; De Tolnay/*Corpus* 5v), the copy of the St. Peter from the Brancacci Chapel (Munich, Graphische Sammlung Inv. n. 2191; De Tolnay/*Corpus* 4r), the Chantilly study of nudes and a draped figure (Chantilly, Musée Condé, Inv. n. 29r; De Tolnay/*Corpus* 24r), and the London study of a draped figure (London, British Museum, Inv. n. 1895-9-15-498r; De Tolnay/*Corpus* 6r); the attribution of the Lille draped figure study (Lille, Palais des Beaux Arts, Inv. n. 231r; De Tolnay/*Corpus* 2r) still remains in question: De Tolnay and Fahy give it to Michelangelo while Ames-Lewis believes it is one of these drapery pattern studies, and only possibly an early study by Michelangelo; see De Tolnay/*Corpus*, 43; Fahy, "Michelangelo": 155. Ames-Lewis says it is possibly a very early drawing by Michelangelo; see Ames-Lewis, "Pattern": 51, n. 15

10 Ames-Lewis, "Pattern": 59ff.

The drawings on linen will be of more use for our present purposes. Until now their purpose has been uncertain. However, by looking at them in relation to colour, it seems much more certain that these drawings were done in preparation for specific paintings rather than the more general *garzoni* "pattern"- book drawings. The linen drawings are associable with the workshops of Ghirlandaio, Verrocchio, and Leonardo, although the attribution of this type of drawing to any one artist is very difficult. Jean Cadogan gives two of the drawings to Ghirlandaio, one in Berlin (Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett) (Fig. 1) which she dates c.1476 or early 1477 and says was done in preparation for the *St. Matthew* figure on the ceiling of the chapel of Santa Fina in San Gimignano, and the other in the Louvre (Paris, Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins) (Fig. 2) which she lists as having been done in the late 1470s in preparation for the Madonna in the Uffizi *San Giusto* altar. In these drawings, Ghirlandaio showed an interest in the high tonal end of the scale, which gives a "sunny" impression, as Cadogan terms it. Ghirlandaio used the folds of the drapery decoratively, creating almost abstracted patterns of zig-zag or geometric shapes; Cadogan mentions a darkening in the tonality of the later Paris drawing as being concurrent with a time in which Ghirlandaio was under the influence of Leonardo.[11] Additionally, in contrast to Verrocchio's drawings and particularly to Leonardo's, Ghirlandaio's drawings create a limited sense of three-dimensionality but not a keenly observed atmosphere of space and light, as they would have had they been executed in Leonardo's manner.[12] This absence of atmosphere will later be seen to be crucial both to Ghirlandaio's and Michelangelo's handling of drapery, and more importantly of colour.

Although traditionally drawings are not thought of as ways of planning colour for paintings, some types of drawings can give at least an indication that the artist was thinking about colour at that stage of preparation, and the drapery studies on linen seem to provide a particularly clear case of such an instance. We can begin to understand more clearly the function of these drawings by looking at them in relation to colour and particularly local hue. Logically, the shadows in both drawings come to a similar depth, as the highlights come to a similar level of brightness; however, the mid-tones vary from one drawing to the next. What this difference in the middle range of the drawings does is convey the impression that each drapery has a different local hue. In other words, a lighter or darker mid-tone suggests an inherently lighter or darker colour such as yellow or blue, whereas the tonality of the areas of shadow and light should be consistent regardless of the local hue. The idea that Ghirlandaio

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11 Cadogan, "Linen": 33-37.

12 Cadogan, "Linen": 36; here I refer to and agree with Cadogan's attribution of the Rome, Gabinetto Nazionale delle Stampe study of a kneeling figure, the Florence, Uffizi (420E) drapery study, Paris, Louvre (inv. 1081, 1082), four Collection Marquis de Ganay and one Fondation Custodia drawings as being by Leonardo.

used these drawings to explore the tonal implications of specific local colours strengthens the idea that they were done in preparation for a specific painting. Ghirlandaio certainly stayed within the confines of the required hues of blue and red for the Madonna. However, if we compare the drawing done in preparation for that figure with the Berlin study for the *St. Matthew* -- yellow in the fresco -- , it is clear that the latter drawing could well represent have been used to explore the tonal effects of a drapery of a lighter hue. Another characteristic of these drawings is that in them Ghirlandaio also considered the lightness or darkness of the background and the overall effect which this might have; he carefully arranged each form and the lighting of it so that where the edge of the form meets the background it is always placed against the opposite light level to ensure that the outline of the form is not lost and *rilievo* is achieved. Leonardo introduced this technique, which was important for Ghirlandaio not only in his drawings but also in his painting style.[13] This emphasis on outline appears again in the two *Adoration of the Magi* panel paintings of approximately this period: the Uffizi tondo (inscribed 1487; Florence: Uffizi) (Fig. 3) and the Innocenti *Adoration* (inscribed 1488; Florence: Galleria degli Innocenti) (Fig. 4). The survival of this type of drawing from the Ghirlandaio workshop therefore gives us the opportunity to see that he clearly thought of colour in his preparation for paintings, wheter in fresco or on panel.

On one level, the connections between Michelangelo and Ghirlandaio's workshop do not need to be belaboured, as we do know with certainty that Michelangelo served his apprenticeship with Ghirlandaio. Condivi was at great pains to establish that Ghirlandaio was envious of Michelangelo's new style, and denied Ridolfo Ghirlandaio's belief that Michelangelo's "excellence and *divinità*" came from Domenico. Condivi even added that the master offered no help to Michelangelo in his artistic development.[14] However, the writer continued that Michelangelo never complained of this but always praised Domenico for his art and manners. On the other hand, Vasari stated that Ghirlandaio thought his pupil knew more about drawing than himself.[15] Given the vested interests which both Vasari and Condivi held in portraying certain versions of Michelangelo's life, it is perhaps most beneficial to base our investigation on the evidence presented by the works themselves, particularly extant drawings. Such a reliance is helpful not only to present some idea of how much Michelangelo's style was dependent on Ghirlandaio and how much was

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13 Leonardo/Kemp, 101, 209-10 and Leonardo/Mc Mahon, 2:152 and 845 respectively, and Vatican, Codex Urbinas Latinus 1270, 219v-220r, 224v and 153r respectively. On the simultaneous contrast of colours and light see: Martin Kemp, "In the Beholder's Eye: Leonardo and the 'Errors of Sight': Theory and Practice," *Accademia Leonardi Vinci* 5 (1992): 153-162.

14 Asciano Condivi, *The Life of Michelangelo*, translated by Alice Sedgwick Wohl and edited by Hellmut Wohl (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 10.

15 Condivi, 10; Vasari/Barocchi, 6:8.

innovative, but also to strengthen the potential links between Ghirlandaio and later artists.

We have a body of about eight early drawings from Michelangelo; in addition to the drawings listed in note eleven are two others: the Ashmolean drapery study, thought to be copied from a work by Jacopo della Quercia, and the Louvre copy from Giotto's Peruzzi chapel.[16] As has been commented upon frequently, this body of drawings reinforces the idea that Michelangelo copied from all the masters: Masaccio, Giotto, possibly della Quercia, and his own master, Ghirlandaio. Furthermore, it has been suggested that the Albertina study of three draped figures was copied not from Masaccio but rather from a drawing that Ghirlandaio made while preparing for the *Miracle of the Boy* fresco in the Sassetti Chapel.[17] Likewise, although Michelangelo's drawing style changed during the course of his career, it did not do so as radically as some others.[18] The fact that Michelangelo notoriously threw away or destroyed many of his drawings, gives special importance to the small number of early drawings that have survived.[19]

On one level, the connections between these early drawings by Michelangelo and those by Ghirlandaio are not particularly strong. In the younger artist's works, many of the draped figures wear typically early-*quattrocento* drapery, the sort of floor-length cape which falls in almost flute-like folds straight from the shoulder to the ground, very different from the pattern drawings and linen studies from Ghirlandaio's shop; we have no example of this latter type of drawing in Michelangelo's painted work. Additionally, we have no surviving copies by Michelangelo from Ghirlandaio "pattern"-book drawings with the possible exception of the Lille drawing. The uncertainty regarding the autorship of this drawing is not without significance in itself; it means that Michelangelo's drawing style at this time was so similar to Ghirlandio's, or that he had so absorbed the *bottega* style that attribution is difficult.

We have a stronger and more meaningful connection between Michelangelo and Ghirlandaio which surprisingly has not been commented upon, between the linen

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16 Oxford, Ashmolean, Parker 327v; De Tolnay/Corpus 8v and Paris, Lourvre, Inv. n. 706r; De Tolnay/Corpus 3r. On the Ashmolean drawing being after a della Quercia, see De Tolnay, *Youth*, 437.

17 I find Hartt's connection of this drawing with the lost *Sacra* fresco from the Brancacci chapel -- based on Vasari's description of the porter included with his ring of keys -- more convincing; see Frederick Hartt, *The Drawings of Michelangelo* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1971), 27; for the description of the porter see Vasari/Barocchi, 3:130 and Vasari/Bull, 1:129: "And he (Masaccio) not only portrayed those noblemen from life but also painted the door of the convent just as it was, with the porter holding the keys in his hand."

18 Micael Hirst, *Michelangelo and His Drawings* (London: Yale University Press, 1988), 5. It is important to note here that even as late as the *Guidizio* in the Sistine Chapel Michelangelo is still using this cross-hatched technique extensively to model the flesh of the figures there.

19 Hartt, *Drawings*, 27.

drapery studies by Verrocchio, Leonardo and Ghirlandaio, and Michelangelo's drapery style and treatment. It is in Ghirlandaio's workshop that Michelangelo would have most likely been exposed to these types of drawings, although he may have seen some by the other two masters at one point. Although it is impossible to prove any influence based on the absence of drawings of this type from Michelangelo's work, the possibility of such an influence should not be entirely removed, particularly as, if we compare the linen studies with the drapery style in Michelangelo's first indisputably secure painting, the *Doni Tondo* (c. 1504-7; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi) (Fig. 23), similarities certainly appear.[20] Both works show an interest in an almost reflective light, in a light which keeps the eye focused on the surface of the drapery and the surface of its forms. This is important particularly in the emphasis on the high tonal end of the range used to represent this light; both images portray greater variety and subtlety in the lit areas, with the drapery only occasionally becoming shrouded in darkness, and even in these areas the definition of the forms is still clear. Michelangelo adapted from Ghirlandaio a decorative type of drapery fold; Leonardo's drawings seem to be much more closely observed, while both Michelangelo and Ghirlandaio are concerned with the decorative effects that can be achieved through patterns of cloth, and by implication, of colour. In particular, the decorative play of right-angled highlights throughout the *St. Matthew* drawing and the flat planes of highlight in the Louvre study, both appear in the *Doni Tondo* drapery. Furthermore, Michelangelo adopted the swag of drapery connecting both knees, which Ghirlandaio used in the Louvre study (in addition to frequently using it in his paintings), turning it into a wide roll of fabric in the Madonna's lap. Additionally, in his panel Michelangelo used the flat fans of drapery lying on the ground which appear not only in Ghirlandaio's linen drawings (particularly the Louvre example), but also in Ghirlandaio's paintings: see, for example, the foreground kneeling Magi in both the Uffizi and the Innocenti *Adorations*, the Madonna in the Sassetti *Nativity* (1485; Florence: Santa Trinità) and in the Tornabuoni chapel *Assumption* fresco and altarpiece, (1486-90; Florence: Santa Maria Novella). These fans also appear both in Leonardo's linen drawings, and in his paintings as well.[21] One of the most noticeable things is the similarity between the sculptural sense of drapery volume given in both Ghirlandaio's drawings and Michelangelo's paintings. In both works, but particularly Michelangelo's, we are aware of the drapery almost as an enclosing sculpted shell,

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20 On the question of the date of the Doni Tondo, see Antonio Natali, "L' antico, le Scritture e l'occasione. Ipotesi sul Tondo Doni," in *Uffizi Tondo Doni e il suo restauro*, Gli Uffizi Studi e Ricerche 2 (ex. cat.) (Florence: Centro Di, 1985): 21-37.

21 For examples of this in Leonardo's drawings, see the kneeling figure (Rome, Gabinetto Nazionale delle Stampe), and for paintings, the Uffizi *Annunciation*. Cadogan, "Linen": 61-2, concludes that the drawings are characteristic of the Verrocchio shop around the 1460s and 70s, but makes no suggestion as to how their type came to be used in the Ghirlandaio shop. A suggestion as to a possible solution appears below.

rather than as a piece of malleable cloth with independent qualities of surface texture and possible translucency. Because of the importance Cadogan places on this particular sculptural quality as distinguishing Ghirlandaio's drawings from those of Leonardo and Verrocchio, this trait deserves particular emphasis.[22]

Ghirlandaio died in 1494, three years after Michelangelo left his workshop. It was thirteen years after their connection that Michelangelo undertook his first and only completed panel painting, the *Doni Tondo*. Through close analysis of Michelangelo's panel painting, it is clear that his style shows close similarity with Ghirlandaio's own style. The fact that this resemblance is carried through over such a long time period raises a variety of issues. The first is the degree to which Michelangelo's painting style was to some extent dependent on that of his master. We will discuss below Michelangelo's professed distaste for painting; he would only accept a painting commission either for friends, as is the case with the tondo, or for an incredibly influential patron, neither of whom he could refuse.[23] When faced with one of these commissions, it seems likely that he would turn to the training he was given in the preparation for a work. This is not to minimise Michelangelo's talent as a painter. However it is important that as an explanation of the fact that his development in his use of colour was not as rapid as in other areas; this is due not only to his hesitancy to undertake commissions for paintings, but also to his reliance on the training he was given. It therefore would be premature to attempt to look at Michelangelo's use of colour before understanding what he would have been taught by Ghirlandaio, in particular through the Tornabuoni chapel, which the Ghirlandaio workshop would have been involved with during Michelangelo's entire apprenticeship.

On behalf of the patron Giovanni Tornabuoni, the commission for his family chapel in Santa Maria Novella was drawn up and signed by both Domenico and David Ghirlandaio on 1st September, 1485. It stipulated that work would begin in May of 1486 and be finished by May, 1490.[24] Work in the chapel was actually finished in December, 1490 as Ghirlandaio requested and received from Tornabuoni a seven-month extension for his work there.[25] Giovanni Tornabuoni requested

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22 Cadogan, "Linen": 38.

23 On Michelangelo's friendship with Agnolo Doni, see Vasari/Barocchi, 6:22.

24 Sheila McClure Ross, "The Redecoration of Santa Maria Novella's Cappella Maggiore" (PhD diss., University of California/Berkeley, 1983), 57 and Gerald S. Davies, *Ghirlandaio* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1909), 103. The contract is in Florence, Archivio di Stato, Archivio Notarile, Rogiti di Jacopo di Martino, 1481-7, M. 237, c. 159-160v under the date 1st September 1485 which was published in Davies, Appendix IV, 103 and 170-2. Davies' publication of the contract is imcomplete; on the inclusion of sections on the "oculus" and preparatory drawings, and various versions of the contract, see Hannelore Glasser, *Artists' Contracts in the Early Renaissance* (New York & London: Garland Publications,1977; reprint, Ph.D. diss. Columbia University, 1965), 112 & 25 n. 2 and 141ff on the contract.

25 Cristina Danti, "Osservazioni conclusive sull' organizzazione del lavoro e sulla tecnica de esecuzione," from Cristina Danti & Giuseppe Ruffa, "Note sugli affreschi di Domencico

paintings representing scenes from the lives of the Virgin Mary and St. John the Baptist, the name-saint of the patron. The chapel's altarpiece, unfinished on Domenico's death on 11 January, 1494, was completed by David and probably their assistant Bastiano Mainardi.[26] It has since been dismembered; the front consisted of a central *Madonna in Glory with Saints* (Munich: Pinakothek No. 1011) (Fig. 5) flanked by two wings depicting *St. Lawrence* (Munich: Pinakothek No. 1012) and *St. Catherine* (Munich: Pinakothek No. 1013) (Fig. 5); the back portrayed in the centre a *Resurrection* (Berlin: Staatliche Museen), flanked by *St. Vincent Ferrer* and *St. Anthony* (ex-Berlin, Staatliche Museen; the two wings were destroyed in World War II). Vasari stated that *St. Catherine*, *St. Vincent Ferrer* and *St. Anthony* were executed by Granacci, Jacopo del Tedesco and Benedetto Ghirlandaio after Domenico's death, a statement supported by the fact that they were done in oil, a medium which Vasari claims Domenico never used. Vasari furthermore added that the *Resurrection* was by Benedetto.[27]

There are a few relevant points relating to colour use brought out by the commission document which should be discussed prior to the paintings themselves. The first sections of the contract cover the subjects to be depicted in the vault, the right and the left walls and specify that the narrative stories will run from the lower to the upper parts of each wall.[28] A discussion of the altarpiece follows these comments and then a lengthy section on technique, which will be the focus for this discussion. First, Giovanni specified that Ghirlandaio must work with the best colours in *buon fresco* and in ultramarine where it is necessary. This use of ultramarine presumably accounts for much of the loss in some blue robes, particularly those of the Virgin.[29] Furthermore, Ghirlandaio was bound to work with other colours where it was convenient, opportune and necessary so that the work will be most pretty and of good quality.[30] Tornabuoni also specified the use of other blues when ultarmarine is not appropriate, and also the use of gold (*auri finis*), and that *bigio* should be used for portraying stone.[31] Finally, there follows a long list of the aspects of the work over which Giovanni had control, this involving virtually every part of the work from the

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Ghirlandaio nella chiesa di Santa Maria Novella," *OPD Restauro* 2 (1990): 29.

26 Davies, 127. On the altarpiece, see Christian von Holst: "Domenico Ghirlandaio: "L'altare maggiore di Santa Maria Novella a Firenze recostruito," *Antichità Viva* 3 (1969): 36-41 and Alfred Scharf, "Notes on the High Altar from Sta. Maria Novella at Florence," *Burlington Magazine* 91 (1949): 217ff.

27 Davies, 128; Vasari/Barocchi, 3:490.

28 Davies, 171.

29 Davies, 171: "*Et promiserunt dicti locatores - omnes dictas hystorias figuras et pitturas pingere facere et exornare cum omnibus coloribus ut vulgariter dicitur posti in frescho* [sic] *et cum azzurro ultramarino ubi opus esset in dictis ...*"

30 Davies, 171: "*... et cum aliis coloribus prout convenit et oportunum erit et necessarium juxta operis pulcritudinem et qualitatem:...*"

31 Davies, 171; *bigio*, although impossible thus far to connect with any known pigment, seems to imply a greyish beige/brown hue but can also be used to refer to a darker grey stone. I would like to thank Dr. Caroline Elam for her help with this term.

colouring to the ornamentation. This left Ghirlandaio relatively little freedom in the overall planning of the work, although we have no evidence of how much of this control Giovanni or his agent actually took; it is the level of creativity shown within these bounds which makes the Tornabuoni chapel such a fine example of Ghirlandaio's painting style and technique.[32]

We also have a great deal of information about Ghirlandaio's preparatory processes which will not be discussed in great detail here other than in relation to the topic at hand.[33] From these varied sources it becomes clear that at least by the two fresco cycles in the 1480s, Ghirlandaio had a very systematic and thorough way of preparing for a fresco cycle which reveals the size and organisation of his studio. The system involved beginning with a rough compositional sketch, then working on the figures (and it is at this point that the linen drapery studies would most likely have been done), and finally coming to the final compositional study and cartoon. This agrees in general with contemporary sources and practice, although Cadogan mentions a difference in attitude from Alberti and Leonardo, particularly in the latter's feeling that the compositional sketch could provide the impetus for the entire work, while Alberti felt it should not be done until everything else was worked out.[34] Furthermore, it seems that Ghirlandaio's workshop system was an extremely well-organised one in which many hands were involved, and which there was a regimented division both of labour and the preparatory work to be done.[35]

The highly organised nature of Ghirlandaio's *bottega* has become even clearer after the recent restoration work done in the Tornabuoni chapel. All writers seem to

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32 We do know that Ghirlandaio changed some of the scenes specified in the contract when he actually carried out the frescoes; the Virgin cycle was changed to include the *Expulsion*, *Massacre* and *Assumption*. The *Meeting at the Golden Gate* was included in the *Birth of the Virgin*; concurrently, the *Purification of Christ* and *Christ in the Temple* were removed. The *Naming of the Baptist* was added to the Baptist cycle; see Ross, 70ff.

33 On this subject see Danti & Ruffa: 39ff; Cadogan, "Linen": *passim*; Ames-Lewis, "Pattern": 49ff; F. Bandini, G. Botticelli, C. Danti, M. Matteini, & A. Moles, "The Restoration of Domenico Ghirlandaio's Frescoes in the Cappella Maggiore of Santa Maria Novella in Florence: Problems, Practical Works, Results," in *Atti del IIC Congress 1986: Case Studies in the Conservation of Stone and Wall Paintings held in Bologna 21-26 September 1986* (London, 1986), 186ff; Jean K. Cadogan, "Drawings for Frescoes: Ghirlandaio's Techniques," in *Drawings Defined*, ed. Walter Strauss & Tracie Felker (New York: Abaris Books, 1987), 63ff; Arthur Rosenauer, "Domenico Ghirlandaio e *bottega*: organizzazione del lavoro per il ciclo di affreschi a Santa Maria Novella (1486-90)," in *Tecnica e Stile: esempi di pittura murale del Rinasciamento italiano*, eds. Eve Borsook and Fiorella Superbi Gioffredi, 2 vols., (Milan: Silvana, 1986), 1:25-30; Jean K. Cadogan, "Observations on Ghirlandaio's Method of Composition," *Master Drawings* 22 (Summer 1984): 159ff; Giuseppe Marchini, "The Frescoes in the Choir of Santa Maria Novella," *Burlington Magazine* 95 (1953): 320ff (discusses pre-1953 restoration).

34 Cadogan, "Observations": 160.

35 See Rosenauer, 28 in which he adds that this was a method begun by Ghirlandaio and then accepted and developed by Raphael, Barocchi and Rubens; for Raphael's workshop see John Shearman's partial lecture publised as: "The Organisation of Raphael's Workshop," in *The Art Institute of Chicago Centennial Lectures* in *Museum Studies: The Art Institute of Chicago* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1983), vol. 10, 41-58.

credit the unified appearance of the work to this regimentation; Ghirlandaio began with the vault, then did the left wall from top to bottom and then the right wall from top to bottom, according to contemporary practice.[36] This is clear in part from the ordering of the *giornate*, which are a bit confused in the left lunette and upper register, but by the middle register has become a set system in which the pilasters and cornices are done before the scene which they surround; this then implies that there could not have been a platform scaffolding running across the entire chapel, as the system would appear in both lunettes rather than only on the left side.[37] The use of the same pigments and the way in which they are disposed, repeated consistently throughout the chapel, enhances this unified feeling.[38] The restoration report is full of comments on how clear and exceptional Ghirlandaio's planning and foresight was in envisioning the frescoes and that, despite the fact that many hands participated in their execution, the preparatory design work seems to be Domenico's alone. This becomes even clearer when we look at the works themselves.

Turning first to the frescoes, for the present purpose it is probably best to discuss them as a general group rather than scene by scene, as it is Ghirlandaio's overall style with which we must be familiar. In arranging the parallel narratives of the life of the Virgin on the left wall and the life of the Baptist on the right wall, Ghirlandaio began each story on the lower left corner, and continued it moving left to right and bottom to top, each narrative finishing with one pointed-arch shaped scene at the top. As Lavin has indicated, this arrangement was actually stipulated in the contract: "*Incipiendo in parte inferiori, ascendenco ad superiorum partem.*"[39] It has recently been observed that in the organisation of the narrative, and the consideration of the way the scenes would be viewed in creating the perspectival framework for the cycle, Domenico gave us a narrative cycle which:

> ... reads in continuous, unbroken rhythmic continuity, in such a simple pattern that one tends to overlook the fact that it is absolutely without parallel in the history of art ... For this achievement in classical equilibrium, so well realized as to go almost unnoticed, Domenico Ghirlandaio remains largely unsung.[40]

One hopes that it will shortly become clear that Ghirlandaio's advances -- or perhaps unifications -- in colour have been equally overlooked.

With regard to colour, Ghirlandaio's organisation was as simple and consistent as his arrangement of other aspects of the cycle. The light in the scenes falls consistly

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36 For another discussion, see Dunkerton, 85.

37 See Danti, 35.

38 On the pigments used, see Bandini et. al., 186-7.

39 Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, *The Place of Narrative: Mural Decoration in Italian Churches, 431-1600* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 207; as she notes, this mention of the disposition of the scenes is unique so far as she has found.

40 M. Lavin, 212.

with the light from the windows of the choir. Therefore, the scenes dealing with the Virgin are lit from the right, while those dealing with the Baptist are lit from the left. Ghirlandaio, as in the linen drapery studies, used this light above all to model form; it is a light which creates plasticity, not atmosphere or depth. Ghirlandaio did not use light to create a specific atmosphere nor to create an overall sense of depth within the scene. This quality is contradictory to his use of linear perspective on which he relied not only to organise his narrative and to harmonise each scene, but also which he took into consideration when dealing with the point of view of the spectator.

In the bottom right tier of the *Visitation* (Fig. 6) and *Annunciation to Zacharias* (Fig. 7) Ghirlandaio took the differing qualities of indoor and outdoor light into consideration; the *Visitation* has very fully saturated hues to which he frequently applied white to obtain the highlights. That he took the types of light into consideration becomes clearer in this instance through a comparison of the angel in the *Annunciation* with Elizabeth from the *Visitation*; here the two differ only in the level of white added to both figures' red to yellow *cangiante* robes. It is difficult to tell to what extent this holds true for the entire fresco as both the blue of the Virgin and the green of the woman at the extreme left have suffered extreme loss in relief or range in modelling. In the same vein, the tonal level of the many portrait figures in the *Annunciation to Zacharias* remains low; these figures are also modelled in inherently dark hues. In the *Annunciation* Ghirlandaio used this technique to set apart the contemporary portrait figures, in fifteenth-century costume fitting of their rank, effectively from the protagonists in the religious narrative.[41] This does not always hold true in similar outdoor/indoor pairings: for example, both second tier pairings of *Presentation in the Temple* (Fig. 8) and *Sposalizio* (Fig. 9) on the left, and *Birth of the Baptist* (Fig. 10) and *Naming of the Baptist* (Fig. 11) on the right. However, due to the absence of architectural background, the *Visitation* example offers the most stark contrast between the two scenes.

Ghirlandaio did not use light to create an overall sense of depth; however, he certainly used it to delineate forms and to place individual forms in spatial relation to one another; for example, in the two men in the foreground of the *Presentation in the Temple*, Ghirlandaio clearly used colour to separate them, placing the blue-draped man in front of the other by having the light fall between them, behind the back of the man in blue and onto the torso and legs of the man in yellow. Ghirlandaio further

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41 For one detailed discussion of the portraits, including helpful diagrams, see: Jan Anrep-Bjurling, "Domenico Ghirlandaio's Portraits in the Tornabuoni Chapel: a problem of identification," in *Kunstgeschichtliche Studien zur Florentiner Renaissance* (Stockholm, 1980), 279-95. Patricia Simons, "Portraiture and Patronage in Quattrocento Florence with Special Reference to the Tornaquinci and their Chapel in Santa Maria Novella" (Ph.D. diss., University of Melbourne, 1985) also discusses the portraits at length; the dissertation is published in part as: "Patronage in the Tornaquinci Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence," in *Patronage, Art and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. F.W. Kent and Patricia Simons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 221-250.

emphasises this through the contrast between the dark blue edge of the front man's robe set against the brightly lit yellow. Importantly, Leonardo characterised blue and yellow as "contrary" colours and commented that setting light colour against dark could increase *rilievo* and depth.[42] For Ghirlandaio, this technique very efficiently placed the two men in relation to one another and would not be nearly so successful were it not for his use of light in doing so.

Ghirlandaio modelled his forms using the standard Cenninian "three tone" system of colour modelling.[43] This in and of itself should not be surprising, as he used this system throughout his career. However the fact that he persisted with this approach in the face of all the innovations going on at this time in terms of colour, and the fact that he remained perhaps the most popular and certainly financially successful artist in Florence at this time both warrant mention. His use of colour modelling in fresco is certainly so consistent that it does not warrant cataloguing each individual case; he frequently varied the tonal range in terms of how much white he added.

What Ghirlandaio did vary, and with a great deal of skill, was his use of *cangiante* modelling, one of the most conspicuous and indeed advantageous aspects of the colour modelling system.[44] His favourite passage seems to be red to yellow drapery, which should not be surprising as it is notoriously difficult to achieve any sort of plastic effects using yellow paint. He also seemed to use *cangiante* a great deal more in the upper scenes where visibility would be a problem; Ghirlandaio increased his application of gold leaf, both in amount and level of relief in the higher sections of fresco, thereby aiding legibility.[45] This use of *cangiante* to improve visibility will be of great importance for Michelangelo in his Sistine lunettes. If figures are to be visible not only from the floor but in a location where the lighting from the windows is not nearly so direct, using *cangiante* is an excellent way of making them more plastic and thereby more easily discernable.

There are a few other instances of creative use of *cangiante*. The first is in the *Massacre of the Innocents* (Fig. 12) where Ghirlandaio used *cangiante* to emphasise figures throughout the scene. In this particularly busy and active scene, Ghirlandaio used hue change, and specifically the red to yellow, in the two women running to the right in the background, while the two struggling women in the foreground are modelled with simple lilac and red drapery. All the figures appear to be modelled in the same level of relief, so this use surely would be a conscious choice. What this

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42 Leonardo/Kemp,101, 209-210; Leonardo/Mc Mahon, 2:152 and 845 respectively; and Vatican, Codex Urbinas Latinus 1270, 219v-220r, 224v and 153r respectively.

43 On this, see Cennino, *Handbook*, 49-52 and idem, *Libro*, 74-77. Linda K. Caron: "Choices Concerning Modes of Modeling During the High Renaissance and After," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 48 (1985): 476ff and Marcia B. Hall, *Color and Meaning: Practice and Theory in Renaissance Painting* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 14-46.

44 See Cennini, *Libro*, 78-79; idem, *Handbook*, 53-54.

45 Bandini et. al, 186.

does is allow the women in the foreground to be perceived as closer to the picture plane, while the women in the background are not lost due to the mêlée of activity going on between them and the viewer. The background figures' dramatic drapery also leads us to the next scene in the narrative.

The second way in which Ghirlandaio varied colour change was by using four separate hues to create his *cangiante* drapery thereby giving a more dramatic and convincing effect. First, in the small *Annunciation* scene (Fig. 13), Ghirlandaio used a very dramatic red to orange to yellow drapery in which each tonal level of hue is not repeated throughout the entire drapery; in other words, yellow, the highlight, does not appear in the back of the robe at all as the drapery there is hidden from the light while in the front of his robe, on the stomach and thighs, almost no red appears, save in the deep folds where it is necessary for creating some sense of relief. Importantly, he used a similar technique for the angel Gabriel in the *Annunciation to Zacharias*. In each instance, this results in a very dramatic, almost anti-realistic gown, fitting for a heavenly messenger. Also in this vein, not heavenly but certainly suitable for the beauty of her dance, is Salome's dress in the *Feast of Herod* (Fig. 14) which goes from red to purple to blue to light blue in the highlights. Additionally, we can look at the robes of the man on the hill in the *Preaching of the Baptist* (Fig. 15); the modelling here ranges from deep red in the shadows, to white in the highlights, with purple and blue used to create mid-tones. Ghirlandaio used a similar technique in the man to the far right of this scene whose robe ranges through two tones of blue to green to yellow. In these instances, unlike the Gabriel figures, he seems to use *cangiante* for a decorative rather than dramatic or symbolic effect. In all four instances, Ghirlandaio created a similar effect with colour to that which Leonardo achieved through the use of shadow: a loss of a certain level of relief and therefore definition of form in the areas of least light. Ghirlandaio did not allow this to interfere with our understanding of the outline of the form, and he tended almost irrationally to highlight one fold of drapery in this darker area to avoid loss of definition: for example, the S-shaped yellow highlight which runs from below the left arm of the man at the right in the *Preaching of the Baptist.*

Ghirlandaio consistently and reliably ensured, with whatever form of colour modelling he chose, that his figures would be legible from their place on the wall; he understood the difficulties inherent in each level of the arrangement and frequently looked to colour to solve these problems. His figures retain a high degree of relief and plasticity, and very clearly and emphatically serve their function. This is something which he underlined even more when considering his colour composition.

In organising his scenes in terms of colour, Ghirlandaio used a palette of fully saturated, pure hues, employing few pale or dark colours and generally only white in order to create relief. This gave the cycle a very vibrant and, as previously mentioned,

legible appearance; furthermore, Ghirlandaio enhanced this by revelling in pairings of these pure hues, frequently placing together groups of what we would now refer to as primary colours: for example, he dresses the group of four women to the back right of the *Annunciation to Zacharias* in yellow, red, blue and green respectively. He did this as well within the same figure, as in the hems of the skirt of the woman to the left of Zacharias in the *Naming of John the Baptist* where he overlay layers of yellow, green and red fluttering skirting, creating an extremely lyrical and decorative passage of colour. This follows Alberti's dictum from some sixty years earlier in which he suggested that:

> ... grace will be present when colours are placed next to others with particular care; for if you are painting Diana leading her band, it is appropriate for this nymph to be given green clothes, the one next to her white, and the next red, and another yellow, and the rest should be dressed successively in a variety of colours, in such a way that light colours are always next to dark ones of a different *genera*. This combining of colours will enhance the attractiveness of the painting by its variety, and its beauty by comparisons. There is a kind of sympathy among colours, whereby their grace and beauty is increased when they are placed side by side. If red stands between blue and green, it somehow enhances their beauty as well as its own.[46]

It is important to note that Alberti's suggestions on the groupings of colour, followed by Ghirlandaio, ignored the more modern advances in methods of colour composition suggested by Leonardo, in which colours are arranged according to the type of light which might strike them, and the background against which they would be placed.[47]

Within each individual scene Ghirlandaio thought of colour change as one choice for compositional organisation, either using it to emphasise particular areas or particular important actors, or to create a logical spatial construction, underlining his always clear and symmetrical linear perspective systems. As did most painters of fresco cycles, he used repetition of similar pigments or *cangianti* techniques to guide the viewer through the composition: for example, in the *Betrothal of the Virgin*, he guided us through the scene using various saturations of yellow, the fullest and broadest range of which is on Joseph; however yellow also appears in two background figures to the left, one in the background right, and one in the foreground. The desaturisation of the main group, stressed by the priest's white robe, puts emphasis on the main protagonists, as the same technique did in the previously discussed *Annunciation to Zacharias*.

In the Tornabuoni chapel, Ghirlandaio considered colour on all levels of organisation: he modelled his figures using pure hues, as opposed to covering them

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46 Alberti/Kemp, 85. For the Italian, see Chapter One, n. 28.

47 For Leonardo's discussion, see: Kemp, *Science*, 168; idem, "Beholder's": 153-62; and Leonardo/McMahon, 2:75v. Leonardo does suggest juxtapositions and pairings of colours; however, these are based more on aesthetic value or mutual enhancement than ideal methods of arranging colours in a composition.

in dark shadow, and he thought of colour as one way of emphasising symbolic events and as a way of structuring the scene, whether it be in terms of depth or in terms of movement. The overall effect is one of brilliant colours which not only decorate the walls, but also participate in the careful and supremely ordered and logical scenes as well.

When comparing Ghirlandaio's colour use with Michelangelo's, there are a variety of subsequent questions which must be asked. First, does Ghirlandaio's colour style in the Tornabuoni chapel carry through to his panel paintings? Or in other words, were the fully saturated hues present in his frescoes a result of the restrictions of the medium or a conscious choice on his part? Unfortunately there are no panel paintings on which Ghirlandaio was working during his time at the Tornabuoni chapel; however, there are two *Adoration of the Magi* panels which he would have been finishing at the beginning of his fresco work: the Uffizi tondo (inscribed 1487; Florence: Uffizi) (Fig. 3) and the Innocenti *Adoration* (inscribed 1488; Florence: Galleria degli Innocenti) (Fig. 4). Both of these panels have the same fully saturated hues as the fresco cycle and indeed the modelling shows the same lack of concern with unifying the tonalities that is characteristic of the colour modelling system. This is particularly visible in the Innocenti panel in the drapery of the king Melchior, to the Virgin's right, whose yellow drape and red robe are much lighter in tone than the blue tunic underneath. In panel paintings effects of atmosphere and of unity are much easier to achieve than in fresco, it is particularly important for the present question that Ghirlandaio chose to focus on colour and on colour modelling, and to ignore the more recent innovations in these areas in panel paintings as well during this period.

When examining Ghirlandaio's colour use vis-à-vis Michelangelo's style, it is furthermore important to ask whether or not Ghirlandaio's particular usage was unique at this time, or whether there were other artists working in this fully saturated colour modelling style. This investigation allows us to determine to what extent Ghirlandaio's colour style was his own creation, and perhaps more importantly how much effect his style might have had on other artists of the day. When looking at Ghirlandaio's colour usage, the first reaction is that it is derivative of the earlier style of Giotto and Masaccio. The question of Ghirlandaio's adherance to his older tradition is raised particularly in the Tornabuoni chapel. Although it can certainly be said that both older masters made use of the Cenninian colour modelling system, the degree of highly saturated pigments used in the fresco cycle and particularly the fully saturated hues he employed in his *cangiante* drapery differs enough from the earlier tradition that it can be seen to some extent as a break. Surely it would be important to an artist as emphatically Florentine as Ghirlandaio to follow this older tradition, but the changes he made in it and their implications for Michelangelo's colour style must be

seen as a new direction which was then taken up by later artists.

Finally, it is perhaps most important to know what effect Ghirlandaio had on other artists of the day and vice versa. The link between Ghirlandaio and the Lippi workshop has already been raised and their connection is strengthened when we now look in greater depth at the colour use of Lippi's son Filippino. Filippino was only twelve when his father died, he was not trained by Filippo but rather by Sandro Botticelli.[48] A variety of contacts between Ghirlandaio and Filippino should be mentioned to strengthen the link, before discussing the main issues surrounding the work at Santa Maria Novella.

The point has already been made that Ghirlandaio may have learned his cross-hatched drawing style from Fra Filippo Lippi. Ames-Lewis details this further relationship in as much as can be known at this point, citing various quotations in each artists' work.[49] First, he lists an almost literal quotation of the Fra Fillippo Lippi *Miraculous Birth of Saint Ambrose* (Berlin, Staatliche Gemäldegalerie) in the Ghirlandaio workshop drawing of two female figures known as the "Grassi Sheet;" second, he notes the connection between an Ashmolean drapery study by Lippi and the same Grassi sheet of Ghirlandio; third, attention is drawn to the drawings of the same two girls by Ghirlandaio (Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum, 33v) and Lippi (Florence, Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe 158Fr) represented in Lippi's Prato fresco of the *Feast of Herod*; and finally, the *Mourning Woman* from the Ghirlandaio workshop (London, British Museum, 1860-6-16-138r) who appears in Lippi's *Death of St. Stephen*, again from the Duomo in Prato. What Ames-Lewis hypothesises from these connections is that Ghirlandaio was a *garzone* in Lippi's shop; he cites the presence of an apprentice called Domenico in the Prato *bottega* between 1459-60 and suggests that the evidence found in the drawings should offer a basis for the consideration of Ghirlandaio as this Domenico.[50] This convincing hypothetical relationship, with which this author agrees, needs to be remembered in this context as it provides an early and formative link between Ghirlandaio and the Lippi shop.

The first of these connections we have through Vasari, stating that during Ghirlandaio's stay in Rome from 1481-2 for work on the Sistine Chapel, he was also commissioned by another Giovanni Tornabuoni, the *parente* of the Florentine, to fresco a funerary chapel in Santa Maria sopra Minerva for his wife Francesca. Verrocchio, or his shop, executed the tomb sculptures and Ghirlandaio not only painted a tondo but also the walls with two scenes from the life of St. John the Baptist

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48 Vasari/Barocchi, 3:559.

49 Ames-Lewis, "Pattern": 53ff; see Ames-Lewis figs. 5, 6, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20.

50 Ames-Lewis, "Pattern": 59.

and two scenes from the life of the Virgin.[51] Ghirlandaio's work at the Minerva certainly would have been finished by the time Lippi began his work there for Cardinal Oliviero Carafa. The Roman Tornabuoni was so pleased with Ghirlandaio's work there that he recommended the artist to his Florentine relative and Ghirlandaio thus received the Santa Maria Novella commission. Unfortunately the Roman chapel was sold and subsequently dismantled; none of Ghirlandaio's work there remains. The connection between the two artists in Rome also provides a point of contact for Ghirlandaio and Lippi vis-à-vis the drapery studies on linen. Filippo Strozzi, Filippino's patron at Santa Maria Novella commissioned Ghirlandaio to paint a fresco of a Madonna with angels and the Strozzi arms above the main door to Santa Maria a Ughi, Florence in 1482; Ghirlandaio also worked for the Strozzi at Santa Maria del Lecceto near Malmantile (about thirty miles west of Florence) where he was paid forty florins on 4th July 1488 to paint the main altarpiece.[52]

The clearest point of contact between Ghirlandaio and the younger Lippi is both artists' contemporaneous work at Santa Maria Novella.[53] So far as we know, and certainly logical for the size of the project, the Ghirlandaio workshop was engaged exclusively on the *Cappella Maggiore* frescoes from the time the contract was signed in 1485 until December 1490 when the frescoes were completed and that Ghirlandaio was in Florence for all of this period.[54] Perhaps as a result of the two major commissions in which he became involved during this time, we fortunately have a number of the documents which survive from this period in Filippino's life; we therefore know a great deal about his movements and his work.[55] Around the same

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51 See Vasari/Barocchi, 3:335; on the chapel, see Gunter Passavant, *Verrocchio: Sculptures, Paintings and Drawings*, trans. Katharine Wilson (London: Phaidon, 1969), 181-2. The possibility that this contact provided a school for the execution and use of linen drapery studies should not be overlooked; as the earliest date we have for any of the drawings is for a Verrocchio (c. 1466) it seems that the older artist would logically then be the originator of this exchange; on the dating, see Cadogan, "Linen": 42.

52 See John R. Sale, "The Strozzi Chapel by Filippino Lippi in Santa Maria Novella" (Ph.D. diss. University of Pennsylvania, 1976), 20, 22 who cites Eve Borsook, "Documenti relativi alle cappelle di Lecceto e delle Selve di Filippo Strozzi," *Antichità Viva* 9 (1970): 5. Sta. Maria dei Ughi was formerly in the Piazza Strozzi; a payment on 31 July 1482 is recorded (Sale cites Archivio di Stato, Florence, Carte Strozziane V, 36, fol.103). None of the work from that church survives and only one predella panel from Sta. Maria del Leccetto survives. Sale, 110, stresses that Strozzi paid Ghirlandaio only seven florins for the entire Ughi fresco while one month earlier he had paid Filippino eight florins for a design for a tapestry, possibly implying the patron's preference for Lippi. On Filippo Strozzi, see Sale, 7ff.

53 For a brief comparison of the two in Santa Maria Novella vis-à-vis colour, see: Patricia Rubin, "The Art of Color in Florentine Painting of the Early Sixteenth Century: Rosso Fiorentino and Jacopo Pontormo," *Art History* 14 (June 1991): 177.

54 See Davies, 172 in which the contract specifies that the work will be finished between May and December 1490.

55 On the Strozzi Chapel see Sale, *passim*; Eve Borsook: "Documents for Filippo Strozzi's Chapel in Santa Maria Novella," *Burlington Magazine* 112 (1970): 737ff; David Friedman, "The Burial Chapel of Filippo Strozzi in Santa Maria Novella in Florence," *L'Arte* 3 (1970): 109-131. On the Carafa Chapel see Gail L. Geiger, *Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel: Renaissance Art in Rome*, (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1986); Carlo Bertelli, "Il

time that Ghirlandaio committed himself to the decoration of the *Cappella Maggiore* in Santa Maria Novella, Filippino signed the contract for the adjacent Strozzi chapel, on 21 April 1487, to be completed by 1 March 1490.[56] After signing the Strozzi contract, Lippi travelled to Rome in August 1488 and signed the contract with the Cardinal Carafa for his chapel in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Rome on 2 September 1488; the document does not survive.[57] We know that Filippino was back in Florence by 21 September of the same year and working in Rome in early 1489.[58] The earliest record of the completion of the Carafa Chapel is 25 March 1493 and it is likely that, under Medici pressure, he completely gave up work at Santa Maria Novella for the more prestigious Roman commission.[59] His time in Florence seems to have been interrupted from late 1489 to 1492 as payments to Lippi during this time from Strozzi stop; painting did continue on the Strozzi chapel however, as payments were made to various artisans for vestments and decorations.[60] Sale charts Lippi's progress in the Strozzi chapel by payments from 11 April 1488 to February 1489 and then importantly for work on the murals from late summer and early fall 1489; five years later payments resume in the late summer of 1494 through much of 1495 and the beginning of 1497, increasing in 1498 and then lingering through the spring of 1502.[61] In terms of what parts were painted when, Vasari records that Lippi executed

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Restauro della Cappella Carafa in Santa Maria sopra Minerva a Roma," *Bollettino dell' Instituto Centrale del Restauro* (1965): 145-96; and most recently, Diana Norman, "In Imitation of Saint Thomas Aquinas: art, patronage and liturgy within a Renaissance Chapel," *Renaissance Studies* 7 (1993): 1-42.

56 The contract is in the Archivio di Stato, Florence, Carte Strozziane V^{e} serie, Busta in Pergamena, n. 1249, `+ 1487. *(Documenti estranei alla Casa Strozzi, 1491f) Scritta della allogagione della chappella con Filippo di Filippo dipintore.*' For the contract and other relevant documents, see Borsook, "Documents": 803 (Doc. 63); see also Glasser, 34 n.2.

57 Geiger, *Carafa*, 48. The date of the signing of the Carafa contract we know from a letter from the cardinal to the Abbot Gabrieli Mazzinghi in the Archivio di Stato, Florence, M.A.P.XLVI, No. 556 published in Geiger, *Carafa*, Doc 3, 186-7.

58 For Rome work see the frequently cited and now lost letter from Filippino to Strozzi (originally in the Biblioteca Marucelliana, Florence, Codex No. 65 with title: *Lettere originali di uomini illustri dei secoli XV, XVI, XVII; Opuscoli greci e latini di vari. Autografa*; published in Geiger, *Carafa*, 187 (Doc. 5).

59 Gail L. Geiger, "Filippino Lippi's Carafa *Annunciation*: theology, artistic conventions and patronage," *Art Bulletin* 63 (1981): 62, n. 1; as Geiger states (Geiger, *Carafa*, 47) Vasari wrote that Filippino: "*... avendo intrinseca amicizia con Lorenzo Vecchio de'Medici, fu da lui strettamente pregato per dovere fare una opera grandissima a Roma per Olivieri Caraffa cardinale napolitano, amico di Lorenzo.*" (Vasari/Barocchi, 3:563). For the payments, see Borsook, "Documents," 741.

60 It is likely that Filippino did not work on the Strozzi chapel from the time of the commission until some time around the first documented payment (11 April 1488) as it probably took Strozzi that long to specify the subjects for the frescoes as was stipulated in the contract; see Borsook, "Documents": 741 and 803 (Doc. 63).

61 Sale, 130; Luciano Berti & Umberto Baldini, *Filippino Lippi* (Florence: Edizioni d'Arte Il Fiorino, 1991); Geiger, *Carafa*, 46 and Doc. 5 cites a 2nd May 1489 letter from Lippi to Strozzi stating that he will return to Florence by St. John's Day 24th June. We have payments to him at Santa Maria Novella on 8 August 1489 and 26 September 1489. Both Geiger (Geiger, *Carafa*, 53, n.10) and Borsook place him in Florence during this time. The murals were still incomplete by 1494 and the 22 August 1494 payment states that it was to finish the murals

the Strozzi vault first after working for Carafa, then went back to Rome for the Carafa burial chamber and finally frescoed the murals of the Strozzi chapel.[62] This would of course imply that the Florentine murals were done after the completion of the Roman frescoes. In short, we have a programme in which Filippino painted the vault in Florence by 1489, went to Rome in 1489 and finished the Carafa chapel by late 1494 at which point he returned to Florence to fresco the walls of the Strozzi chapel. Therefore, all Filippino's frescoes at Santa Maria Novella would have been carried out either while Ghirlandaio was working or had finished and that the vault would have been done while Ghirlandaio himself and his workshop were actually still in the adjacent larger chapel. More specifically, it means that the vault would have been done most likely while Ghirlandaio was painting the left wall, while the murals could have been done while Ghirlandaio was creating the later right mural.

The main point of tracing the chronology is that it raises questions regarding the relationship between the two in terms of colour; during the late 1480s we have almost a living laboratory in which the two are working side by side, both on very important commissions and both with very specific instructions and guidelines with which to work. It remains our duty to find out as best possible how the influences may have run, and what the colouristic evidence is for this.

Filippino Lippi was involved during his career in three main fresco cycles: the additions to the Brancacci chapel, the Strozzi chapel, and the Carafa chapel. One of the problems with looking at Filippino's colour usage is that unlike with Ghirlandaio's work, there are almost always intervening factors; this is particularly true for Lippi's work in fresco, the medium which is the focus of the present discussion. In the Brancacci chapel, he had to harmonise his work to match or at least to work with the already existing works by Masaccio and Masolino; in the Strozzi chapel he was constrained by the grisaille work which decreases the overall tonality of the frescoes; and finally in the Carafa chapel he faced a similar task, this time as a result of the necessity of including black and white Dominican robes. On the other hand, Ghirlandaio had relative freedom, not just in the scenes he painted, but certainly much more in terms of what colours he used and, moreover, how he used them.

Before turning to the actual works at hand, it is helpful to take a brief look at Filippino's colour style in the Brancacci chapel, if only to establish a baseline with which to compare later changes. In the Brancacci chapel, Filippino painted the small scenes of *Saint Peter Visited in Prison by Saint Paul* and *Saint Peter Liberated from Prison* as well as the larger *The Dispute with Simon Magus*; he also completed the *Raising of the Son of Theophilus and Saint Peter in the Chair* begun by Masaccio.[63]

(Borsook, "Documents": 744).

62 Vasari/Barocchi, 3:563: "*...ma fatto il cielo, gli bisogno tornare a Rome dove fece per il detto cardinale una sepoltura di stucchi e gesso.*"

63 Umberto Baldini & Ornella Casazza, *The Brancacci Chapel Frescoes* (New York:

Restorers comment that from the scaffolding it is clear that Masaccio was the more luminous of the two artists, using more white in the highlights, and that Filippino in turn worked in lower relief, constructing forms using contour lines more than internal modelling and colour gradations with low contrast.[64] This accords well with the developments in colour theory and painting technique which occurred from Masaccio's work to Filippino's, mainly the change from the Cenninian to the Albertian system of modelling. In Filippino's scenes, and this is particularly clear in the *Raising of the Son of Theophilus* (Fig. 16), he slightly changed the earlier palette through the addition of a turquoise hue and a brighter red; unfortunately, no reports on the pigments used in the chapel seem to exist, so the exact identity of these pigments remains a mystery. When painting the portrait figures in the same scene Filippino darkened these areas of the work by dressing them in dark maroons and browns, although Masaccio had set the precedent for this to some extent in the portrait group to the extreme right. Ghirlandaio later used this same technique in the portraits in the *Annunciation to Zaccharias* in the Tornabuoni chapel. These same pigments carry through to Filippino's subsequent works in the chapel, and in fact the turquoise plays a main role in the *Dispute* fresco. In terms of composition, Filippino seemed to use colour to pick out important actors and to differentiate between various groups. Therefore, prior to his work in the Strozzi and Carafa chapels, Filippino was already working in low relief with a highly saturated palette.

This colour style seems to carry through in the altarpieces executed during this time as well, although due to the medium there seems to be more Albertian use of black in shadows and an adherance to the Albertian dictum for moderation in all parts of the painting.[65] This can be seen in particular in the *Vision of St. Bernard* (c.1480-86; Florence: Badia Fiorentina) (Fig. 17) and the *Madonna degli Otto* (inscribed 1485; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi) (Fig. 18).[66] The former betrays a concern with harmonising the tones in the work, particularly in the degree of black used in the monks robes and in the amount of white used in the angel's blue tunic. The latter in fact even goes so far as to become almost Leonardesque in the depth to which the shadows go, for example in the Baptist's red drape.

This brings us of course to the point of contact between Ghirlandaio and Filippino at Santa Maria Novella, any discussion of which the Carafa chapel must be a part as seen above. The restraints placed on Filippino's colour use there have been mentioned already; to be more specific, the choice of depicting the Dominican robes in the Carafa chapel was not his decision but that of the Cardinal, as the habits were

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Abrams, 1992), 183 - 245.

64 Ibid., 327.

65 Ibid., 84.

66 For a discussion of the date of the Badia altar, see Berti & Baldini, 182-3.

integral to the subjects chosen by him.[67] The use of the *grisaille* work in the Strozzi chapel is however a more complicated question.

The *grisaille* work in the Strozzi chapel to a large extent determines the appearance of the entire work. The browns and whites give a fairly low sense of tonality and therefore predetermine that the colour will either be fully saturated, and therefore jarring, or of a lower tonal level, and therefore more consonant with the classical decorations. The question of who decided whether the *grisaille* would be part of the frescoes has implications for the extent to which we can say Filippino had control over his colour style in the chapel; fortunately we can again turn to the contract for information.

It appears from the contract that Strozzi kept fairly tight control over the chapel decoration (Figs. 21 & 22);[68] he specified that there would be four figures in the vault and that gold and ultramarine should be used there. Regarding the chapel walls themselves, it is written:

> *E da ogni facc[i]a d'essa ànno a essere dua storie, secondo che dal detto Filippo Strozzi li saranno date: e dalla facc[i]a della finestra, e pilastri e archo della chappella, dentro e di fuori, e arme, debba adornare secondo che dal detto Filipo li sarà ordinato.*[69]

Although the fact that both men are called Filippo complicates matters, throughout the contract the patron is referred to in some way with Strozzi, while the painter is usually just Filippo.[70] This would imply that Strozzi determined both the iconography and the decorative scheme.[71] No mention is made in the documents regarding *grisaille* work, classical elements, or colour other than the usual references to the use of ultramarine and gold. Strozzi certainly kept tight control over the decoration of the chapel; however Filippino also demonstrated a continuing interest in the antique. Due to the close working relationship between the two it is likely the classical elements were included by consensus, although a definitive answer can probably never be reached.

Following on from this, another connection between Lippi's *grisaille* work and Ghirlandaio's bears mentioning: both artists' use of clasical motifs, with Ghirlandaio's surely as the precedent. His workshop was known for the study of classical motifs, exemplified in the *Codex Escurialensis* from which Raphael certainly

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67 Geiger, *Carafa*, 49 considers the choice of scenes from St. Thomas Aquinas' life not at all extraordinary given his importance for the Cardinal and for the Dominicans who had charge of Santa Maria sopra Minerva.

68 Sale comments on this as well, and states that it is typical of Strozzi commissioning patterns; Sale, 112-114.

69 Borsook, "Documents": 803.

70 On Strozzi's control of subject matter and involvement in the specifications of the contract, see Sale, 112ff.

71 Borsook, "Documents": 803; later in the document the patron specifies that the artist will have colours, blues, scaffolding, plaster and wood: "*E sono d'accordo che 'l detto Filippo di Filippo abbia avere per manifattura, cioè dipintura, cholori, azurri, ponti, chalcina, legniame ...*"

saw and drew.[72] The *Codex* includes architectural drawings as well as drawings after ancient reliefs and statues very similar in type to those in filling the Strozzi chapel. This in no way is meant to imply that Lippi saw the sketchbook and copied from it for the Strozzi chapel; Filippino's use of these motifs is far too different from as well as more overt, ornate and decorative than Ghirlandaio's for this to be the case. However the use of these motifs in a chapel beside Ghirlandaio who was studying just this type of work and who had used such figures in his own images should not be overlooked. Rather it is to just this sort of use of classical elements which we would expect Filippo to look in order to compete beside the largest workshop in Florence.

And it is here that we come to the even more important issue of colour. The use of classical motifs represented in *grisaille* certainly would and did have implications for Filippino's colour use in the chapel. Its monochromatic nature led to an obvious reduction in the overall unity of colour in the work. Filippino did not necessarily need to harmonise colour with the *grisaille* work; however, his choice to do so should be noted. He used fairly saturated hues in the foreground figures although these against the background architecture give an impression of a polychrome frieze in front of white marble architecture which has then been decorated. Only the main protagonists wear fully saturated, simple robes: on the right wall St. Philip in green, pink and white and the priest of the temple in yellow and red. The other figures, the bystanders, give the overall impression of being in *grisaille*, but are modelled in more subtle, bright (high tonality) shades of pink, blue and green. On the left hand wall, the figures wear for the most part only one hue over a white tunic. All these are ways of decreasing the sense of fully saturated colours while still maintaining their beauty in certain areas and for certain emphases, thereby creating a more integrated work.

To some extent this holds true for the concurrent Carafa chapel (Figs. 19 & 20). Here, too, Lippi had to deal with an element which would have a strong effect on his colour use: the black and white Dominican robes necessitated by the subject matter. In this case, the problem is not a chosen one; it is also limited to the left side wall and lunette, as the subjects on the main wall of the chapel do not require the monastic habit. In these scenes Filippino's interest in fully saturated hues came to the fore; however he overcame the problems in difference in plasticity and tonal unity by using a great deal of *cangiante* modelling. This creates frescoes which are extremely legible in terms of colour; even without the bright artificial lights, not only can the

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72 Shearman, "Escurialensis," and Hermann Egger, *Codex Escurialensis: Ein Skizzenbuch aus der werkstatt Domenico Ghirlandaios* (Vienna: A. Holder, 1905); see also J. Albert Dobrick, "Ghirlandaio and Roman coins," *Burlington Magazine* 123 (1981): 356ff and N. Rubinstein, "Classical Themes in the Decoration of the Palazzo Vecchio," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 50 (1987): 29-43. On Filippino's interest in the antique, see Sale, 231ff and Innis H. Shoemaker, "Drawings after the Antique by Filippino Lippi," *Master Drawings* 17 (Spring 1978): 35-42.

figures be read clearly, but each hue can be differentiated from the others with great ease. He used strength of hue to balance the dramatic black and white contrast of the Dominicans. Furthermore, he used decreased relief in the background figures to create a sense of depth, particularly in the Apostles surrounding the altarpiece. He does this not with black, but rather again with fully saturated hues. The lunette shows less use of hue change modelling and interestingly, the palette and saturation decrease as the composition moves to the right, away from the protagonist saint and towards his intervening family. In these frescoes, Filppino showed a greater interest in colour modelling and in fully saturated hues, consistent with that already seen in the Brancacci chapel. It seems then that the *grisaille* was a conscious choice on Filippino's part and that he then organised the colour in order to harmonise with this dimming influence. His use of saturated colour, regardless of the size of the field, remains a consistent interest across the work and he looks to it to organise both works in terms of centres of action and interest.[73]

This whole enquiry into Filippino's colour provides us with a point of comparison for Ghirlandaio's colour style during this period and highlights an interesting look at the under-emphasised dynamic between the two artists in that Filippino does seem -- in some areas -- to be setting himself up in competition with Ghirlandaio; Filippino choses some of the same interests, such as colour modelling and use of classical motifs, and yet employs them in different ways and to different ends. The comparison between the two artists furthermore offers a view into late fifteenth century colour usage. This is not of course to imply that saturated colour was the only issue of the day. Rather this examination demonstrates that colour modelling certainly did not fade out in the later fifteenth century; it continued, through Ghirlandaio and Filippino each in their own way, into the sixteenth century through the strong workshop system in place in Florence during this time.

And it is in this way that the colour style was transferred to and developed in

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73 A further connection follows Filippino and Domenico's contact at Santa Maria Novella, in work for the monastery of San Francesco del Palco at Prato; see Crowe & Cavalcaselle (1864-66), 2:443ff. Crowe and Cavalcaselle relate that the brotherhood could not raise the thirty-five ducats asked by Ghirlandaio and that they then on 19 June 1491 wrote to the municipal council requesting help with the funding; they wrote that they needed the altarpiece to help with worship. The council gave them twenty ducats; however Ghirlandaio never carried out the commission. Rather Filippino was entrusted with the altarpiece in 1495. The 1864 edition of Crowe and Cavalcaselle lists the Filippino painting as the Munich *Resurrection* and *Noli Me Tangere*; however, Langton Douglas, the editor of volume 4 of the 1903-14 edition adds that this picture was indeed for Prato and was executed in 1495 but neither for the brethern nor was it the completion of the Ghirlandio commission, as this was a *Madonna and Child with Saints* referred to in a 17 December, 1492 document citing completion of payments to Davide Ghirlandaio; see: Crowe & Cavalcaselle, 1903-14, 4:283. This does not rule out change of subject matter. For a tentative attribution of the predella of the Munich painting to Ghirlandaio see: Fiorella Gamba, "Di una predella falsamente attribuita a Filippino Lippi," in *Studi in Onore di Matteo Marangoni* (Florence, 1957). Vasari does not mention the Prato painting in his life of Ghirlandaio and in Filippino's life only writes that: " ... *et al Palco, luogo de'Frati del Zoccolo fuor di Prato, lavorò una tavola.*" See Vasari/Barocchi, 3:562.

the early decades of the sixteenth century. As we have seen earlier, Ghirlandaio's workshop practices would have been absorbed by Michelangelo and the other apprentices of his workshop. As one of the most popular artists in Florence, Ghirlandaio's style would certainly be a useful and lucrative one to know. And through their participation in the frescoes and altarpiece for the Tornabuoni chapel, the apprentices would not only have trained in this style at perhaps the height of the master's fame, but also by their participation in the project would be expected to assimilate as closely as possible the style of the workshop. And it is to this basis, this core work that Michelangelo studied while in the painter's studio, to which he appears to have turned when executing later commissions for paintings. Furthermore, it is this style from which Michelangelo moved on when working on the second half of the Sistine ceiling, creating new possibilities for colour usage. And it is from this point that we may now move to look more closely at Michelangelo's own colour style in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

MICHELANGELO

Michelangelo's colour usage is perhaps the most crucial precedent for understanding the colour use of the painters of early sixteenth-century Florence. Not only does it provide a link with the influential tradition of Florentine colour modelling in the late fifteenth century discussed in the first chapter, but his own innovations in this area further expand the ways in which and ends for which colour modelling can be used. Michelangelo's identity as a Florentine -- brought about not only from his continuing ties with his place of birth and fellow Florentines, but also from his correspondence, and the number of works which remained behind in his native city once he had gone to Rome -- certainly must have been an important factor for artists such as Rosso and particularly Pontormo who lived and worked in or around Florence for most of their careers.[1] Certainly at the time of their training, around 1512, Michelangelo would have been a well-known Florentine artist, although at this point he himself was in Rome just finishing the Sistine ceiling. It is important to understand the basis of Michelangelo's own colour style, particularly as he considered himself a sculptor rather than a painter. Not only was it the opinion of Bramante and "other rivals" that Michelangelo's principle art was the making of statues, which Condivi agrees was true, but also Michelangelo, in his own letters and poetry, and in his attempts to escape the commission for the Sistine ceiling, pleaded that painting was not his art.[2] As an artist he clearly became deeply involved with any

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1 Michelangelo maintained business connections with Florence throughout his career, as is clear through a reading of his correspondence particularly with his father Ludovico di Buonarrota Simoni and his brother Buonarroto. See: *Il Carteggio di Michelangelo*, eds. P[aola] Barocchi and R. Ristori, 2 vols. (Florence:Sansoni, 1965-83), *passim*; and idem, *The Letters of Michelangelo*, trans. & ed. E.H. Ramsden (London: P. Owen, 1963), *passim*; at the time he left for Rome, he left in the city the *David*, the Cascina cartoon, the incomplete *St. Matthew*, the Pitti and Taddei sculpted *tondi* and the *Doni Tondo*: see Alessandro Cecchi, "Il Tondo Doni agli Uffizi," in *Uffizi Tondo*, 38ff.

2 Condivi, 39; Vasari/Barocchi, 6:33; Vasari/Bull, 2:340. For the relevant letter of 27 January 1509 to Padre Lodovico in Florence, see: Michelangelo, *Carteggio*, 1:88: "*...il non esser mia professione...*;" he also writes to Buonarroto regarding his making a dagger for Pietro Orlandini that "... it is not my profession"; see *Letters*, 19 (Doc. 9). For the sonnet to Giovanni da Pistoia, see *The Poetry of Michelangelo*, trans. James M. Saslow (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1991), 70 which gives both the Italian and the English translation: "*...nè io*

commission he took up; however his attitude to painting must be kept in mind. As a sculptor, Michelangelo was trained to think in terms of relief and light but not necessarily revealing these through the local hue; it is likely, therefore, that he would rely to some extent on his early training in the Ghirlandaio shop when the need arose to work not only in two dimensions but also in colour.[3] Particularly important is the fact that in his early years in Rome he still wrote to Florence for materials and assistance, and seemed to rely on the ties made in the Ghirlandaio studio.[4] This is the only time we will take an extended look at a work created for a non-Tuscan site; however, given Michelangelo's strong connections with Florence and the impact made by the Sistine chapel on Florentine artists, this change in emphasis seems not only allowable but supremely appropriate.

The intention of this chapter is not to provide an exhaustive treatment of Michelangelo's colour use and all the controversies in detail, but rather to highlight, in a functional manner, the most important and germane issues for the subsequent discussions. Michelangelo's colour use in the paintings done leading up to and including the Sistine vault will be considered, with an emphasis on both establishing his reliance on his early training and on the advancements he made, particularly in the second half of his work in the Sistine chapel. To do this, we examine the *Doni Tondo* (c.1504-7; Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi) (Fig. 24) and the Sistine ceiling (1508-12; Rome, Vatican Museums), and somewhat more briefly, the London *Entombment* (c. 1500-1502; London, National Gallery) (Fig. 25). In addition, Michelangelo's attitude towards colour as revealed in his writings and letters is looked at when appropriate. Throughout, an eye is kept both on the affect which Ghirlandaio and late fifteenth century Florentine painting had on his work and on the areas of his innovative new colour style which may have been attractive to later artists.

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pittore." Condivi writes that Michelangelo told the Pope regarding the Sistine that "... this is not my art ..."; Condivi, 57.

3 On Michelangelo's apprenticeship see: Jean K. Cadogan, "Michelangelo in the workshop of Domenico Ghirlandaio," *Burlington Magazine* 135 (January 1993): 30-1; Vasari/Barocchi, 6:5-6 and Vasari/Bull, 1:327-9; Everett Fahy, "Michelangelo": 152-6.

4 See the letter from Rome of August 1499 to his father in Florence asking him to "buy me, either from Francesco Granacci or from some other painter, an ounce of varnish..." Michelangelo, *Letters*, 1:6. To my knowledge, for what reason Michelangelo needed this varnish has not been established. Michelangelo often looked to Granacci for help early in his career: see letters in Michelangelo, *Letters*, 1:13, 25, 29, 36, 38, 47, 67, 162. See also the well-known letter from Rome to Frate Jacopo Jesuato in Florence asking for "a certain amount of fine quality azure ..." Michelangelo, *Letters*, 1:45; as Ramsden notes, the letter arrived to Frate Jacopo with a covering letter from Granacci. As a point of interest, according to Fabrizio Mancinelli, Michelangelo avoided azure as a pigment in the Sistine ceiling as it could go to green in humid conditions. He preferred *smaltino* mixed with *bianco di san giovanni*, important as it is a combination also used by Ghirlandaio; see Fabrizio Mancinelli, "Tecnica di Michelangelo e organizzazione del lavoro," in *Michelangelo e la Sistina: la tecnica, il restauro, il mito*, eds. Fabrizio Mancinelli & Giovanni Morello, ex. cat. (Rome: Fratelli Palombi, 1990), 56.

Before beginning to analyse Michelangelo's colour style, a few words need to be said about the attitude which will be taken to the controversy which has surrounded the restoration or conservation of all of the paintings which will be discussed. This is not the place for a long discussion of the ethics of painting conservation or of the criticisms of the various restoration campaigns; it merely needs to be said that much of what will be written is tempered either positively or negatively by the fact that each of these paintings have seen some sort of substantial recent intervention, and a number of past treatments. Many of the analyses of technique, pigments and so on could not have been done without the information gathered in the course of cleaning work. In trying to assess works which have undergone some sort of conservation, we need to be sure firstly, that we are not expecting that these paintings will stand up to twentieth century expectations when placed in twentieth century environments with flood lights and changed windows; and secondly and more importantly we should not expect that the paintings have survived in pristine condition throughout the centuries and will be somehow magically revealed in their original appearance from under layers of dirt and accumulation. We also need to look as much as possible with a period eye and period conditions, and not with our own twentieth century requirements conditioned by prior research, years of looking at photographs rather than the actual paintings, and the awareness of the controversy surrounding the "new" appearance of many of these works. This is of course a difficult if not impossible task. However it is important when looking at colour in any work to be aware of the painting's conservation history and the certain effect which that history will have on the appearance of the work today.

The influence of Michelangelo's apprenticeship with Ghirlandaio should not be underestimated, and indeed has not been with the recent examination of his early London painting(s).[5] We have already looked at the influence of Ghirlandaio's drawing style on that of Michelangelo. Also the reliance on *bottega* connections for assistants surely affected the organisation and progress of work on the vault frescoes; both Wallace and Mancinelli have proven that it is doubtful that Michelangelo truly worked alone as suggested by Vasari. However the most important issue for us here is that Michelangelo turned to the colour modelling he learned from Ghirlandaio to create powerful, assertively three dimensional figures; the strong sense of rilievo which he could therefore create, was for him the pivotal issue in painting. It certainly would have been possible for him, after Alberti and Leonardo, to use a more current modelling system, but as we have shown, this would have gone against not only his training but also his initial reluctance to paint. In this vein we must also remember his

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5 See Hirst & Dunkerton, *passim*.

identity as a Florentine, and the fact that by looking to this late fifteenth century painting style he places himself in and continues this Florentine tradition.[6] He carries this tradition to Rome, picking up on Filippino's work in the Carafa Chapel, and then in the development of his work in the Sistine chapel particularly in the use of colour change modelling, makes it his own.

As we have previously discussed, Michelangelo's painting training took place in the studio of Domenico Ghirlandaio, during the time when that workshop would have been involved in the frescoes for the Tornabuoni chapel in Santa Maria Novella in Florence. Until recently, the artist, commission and date of the London *Entombment* were still hotly debated. However, with the recent exhibition and accompanying publication of *The Young Michelangelo*, Jill Dunkerton and Michael Hirst have not only firmly established the authorship of Michelangelo, but also provided us with invaluable knowledge regarding his painting technique and materials.[7] Although it seems for the most part now accepted as autograph, neither Vasari nor Condivi mention the painting; it has most recently been discussed as being begun by Michelangelo in September 1500 as an altarpiece for the funerary chapel dedicated to the Pietà for the Bishop of Crotone, Giovanni Ebu in Sant' Agostino in Rome and left unfinished in 1501. This makes it the first documented painting done independently after his apprenticeship.[8] For our present purposes, the most important thing is that painting was conceived of before the Sistine work and probably before the *Doni Tondo*. Due to its unfinished state and the fact that it was likely worked on in two stages, quite disparate in date, it cannot offer much specific help. However the work done on its technique during the 1970 restoration and the more recent project

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6 Shearman stresses the point that colour was essential to Florentine painting as much as to Venetian: see John Shearman, "Le funzioni del colore," in *La Cappella Sistina* (Novara: Istituto Geografico De Agostini, 1993), vol. 2, *La Volta Restaurata: Il Trionfo del Colore*, 80.

7 See Hirst & Dunkerton and in particular, Dunkerton, "Painter," 83-133. Unfortunately much of the powerful visual material from the exhibition did not make it into the catalogue, such as the room of comparative photographs including images of the *Bruges Madonna* and the sculpted *tondi* and the samples of what pigments would have been used in what areas, allowing the viewer to "readjust" for colour changes over time.

8 See Alexander Nagel, "Michelangelo's London "Entombment" and the church of San Agostino in Rome," *Burlington Magazine* 136 (March 1994): 164-7 which takes Michael Hirst, "Michelangelo in Rome: an altar-piece and the "Bacchus"," *Burlington Magazine* 123 (October 1981): 580-593 as a starting point. For the most recent discussion, see Michael Hirst, "The *Entombment*" in Hirst & Dunkerton, 57 ff. For the alternate suggestion that the painting was begun around 1505 as the altarpiece for the Julius tomb, left unfinished and then picked up again in 1515-16 for Pierfrancesco Borgherini as an altarpiece for San Pietro in Montorio, see: Michael Levey, "A hypothesis about the original destination" and Cecil Gould, "The second phase: a further hypothesis" both in: Michael Levey, Cecil Gould, Joyce Plesters & Helmut Ruhemann, *Michelangelo's Entombment of Christ: Some new hypotheses and some new facts* (London: National Gallery, 1970), 9ff. On this painting, see also: Andrew Butterfield, "A Source for Michelangelo's National Gallery "*Entombment*"," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz* 33 (1989): 390-393 and Cecil Gould, "Michelangelo's Entombment: a further addendum," *Burlington Magazine* 116 (1974): 31-2.

completed in 1994 provide useful comparative material.[9] Given the thorough recent analysis by scholars such as Dunkerton and Hirst, the *Entombment* does not need much greater elaboration. A great deal of attention has been paid to the condition of the painting and the state of finish or damage. The medium seems to be oil, and bears similarities -- not surprisingly at this point -- to Ghirlandaio's panel technique.[10] Alterations in pigment have disturbed the overall balance and impression of colour in the *Entombment*, particularly change of the copper resinate pigments to brown, making those areas such as the drape of the right hand standing Mary not quite so brilliant. The kneeling Mary lower left and Joseph of Arimathea wear robes which would originally have been dark purple or maroon. Furthermore, the completely unpainted Virgin in the lower right corner would likely have worn ultramarine drapery.[11] All of these alterations, together with the similar modelling technqiue would give the *Entombment* a much closer resemblance to the *Doni Tondo* than we can now perceive and one which, if we ignore the profoundly different figure composition holds few surprises. Due to the unfinished nature and the damage, lengthy analysis would not bear much fruit.

Michelangelo painted the *Doni Tondo* (c. 1504-7; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi) (Fig. 24), as Vasari tells us, for Agnolo Doni.[12] The date for this work remains hotly debated. Vasari lists the *tondo* between the *Bruges Madonna* and the *Battle of Cascina* cartoon, and Condivi also places it after the *Bruges Madonna* and immediately before his being called to Rome by Pope Julius II. Firmer and more reliable evidence for dating has been offered by two occasions in the life of the patron: Doni's marriage to Maddalena Strozzi in January 1504, and the birth of the couple's daughter Maria on 18 November 1507; both coincide with periods when Michelangelo would have been in Florence.[13] Given the nature of the debate over

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9 See Joyce Plesters, "The Materials and Technique," in Levey, Gould, Plesters & Ruhemann, 21ff.

10 Dunkerton, "Painter," Hirst & Dunkerton, 111.

11 On the alteration of pigments, see ibid., 119ff.

12 See Vasari/Barocchi, 6:22-23 and Vasari/Bull, 1:340. On this painting see: Ezio Buzzegoli, "Michelangelo as a Colourist, Revealed in the Conservation of the Doni *Tondo*," *Apollo* 117 (1983): 405-406; Alessandro Conti, "Considerazioni sul Tondo Doni e il suo restauro," *Prospettiva* 44 (1986): 62-68; Graham Smith, "A Medici source for Michelangelo's *Doni Tondo*," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 38 (1975): 84-5. For a critique of the restoration and discussion of possible removal of varnishes: Antonio Natali, "Il restauro del Tondo Doni e la sua presentazione agli Uffizi," *Prospettiva* 42 (1985): 80-81. Anna Forlani Tempesti, "Raffaello e il Tondo Doni," *Prospettiva* 33 (1983): 144-149. *Uffizi Tondo* presents the restoration reports and research done on the occasion of the cleaning of the painting in 1985.

13 For the first date, see for example Charles De Tolnay, *The Youth of Michelangelo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), 166, based on Michelangelo referring to himself as "*etiam pictor*" in a 1504 document; as Michelangelo was trained as a painter, this alone does not seem adequate evidence. For the second date, see Antonio Natali, "L'antico, le Scritture e l'occasione: Ipotesi sul Tondo Doni," in *Uffizi Tondo*, 21ff in which he argues that the painting

payment it seems likely that the Michelangelo painted the picture while in Florence.

Michelangelo painted the *Doni Tondo* on panel with an oil priming; the exact makeup of the medium is difficult to define as it seems to contain an egg tempera with both watery areas and some oily resin, both laid on in thin layers. It has been theorised to be *tempera grassa*, with only a few pigments being laid on in the upper layers with only oil.[14] Michelangelo used a classic priming typical of this period and painted over it with pigments which were suited to panel, including vermilion which cannot be used in tempera; this is presumably one of the areas in which he used an oil binder.[15] The *Entombment* also contains a variety of pigments and binders. The *tondo* survived in good condition, save for areas in the grass where copper resinate has turned to brown. This high quality technique from a painter who, to our knowledge at this point was relatively inexperienced, surely points to excellent and solid training.

Light in the painting falls from the left, creating clear areas of dark and light. There is a complete and almost emphatic absence of any kind of *chiaroscuro*, *sfumato* or any effect which might suggest a lit atmosphere of some kind, other than a brightly lit outdoor setting. None of the unity of lighting or subtle atmospheric phenomena observed, recorded and written about by Leonardo occur in Michelangelo's painting, and in fact certain areas show him to be clearly at odds with some of Leonardo's interests. However certain aspects of Leonardo's writings are consistent with Michelangelo's early painting, and importantly these are those features we have already seen as central for Ghirlandaio.[16] Where the Virgin's left sleeve abuts Joseph's protruding left knee, Michelangelo has taken care to outline the edge of the pink cuff with dark brown and almost illogically emphasise the bit of yellow highlight of Joseph's drapery to ensure that the relief of these two forms are not lost in the shadow which we know to occur here; we see the depth of this shadow in Joseph's left shoulder and the area below his left knee. He also artificially increases the light

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was done on the occasion of the birth of a daughter, based on the iconographical emphasis on birth, and on a quotation in the nude background figure in the tondo behind Joseph's shoulder of the priest in the Laocoon group, particularly of the priest's legs. Michelangelo's presence shortly after the unearthing of this sculpture on 14 January 1506 makes this a particularly powerful suggestion; however the question still needs some sort of documentary or other more compelling evidence to be truly laid to rest. Natali offers as further support to this later dating the fact that Raphael quotes the Virgin, although turned clockwise, in his 1507 Borghese *Entombment*; no earlier references to quotes of this figure are known.

14 See Buzzegoli, "Colourist": 405.

15 For the technique, see Ezio Buzzegoli, "Relazione sul restauro del dipinto," in *Uffizi Tondo*: 57ff and Mauro Matteini & Arcangelo Moles, "Alcuni indagini sulla tecnica pittorica," also in *Uffizi Tondo*: 77ff.

16 The connection of this sort of technique with both Ghirlandaio and Leonardo's drapery studies on linen and with some of Leonardo's writings has been discussed in Chapter 2.

level behind the Virgin's head, where it should be blocked by Christ's body, to emphasise her head and create an almost halo-like effect. This kind of control over the lighting and arrangement of colour harkens back to Leonardo's comments highlighted by Claire Farago and discussed earlier.

This deliberate use of light to emphasise forms, their relief, and their outlines carried through in the way in which Michelangelo used colour to model the forms. Michelangelo defined his forms using blocks of colour and then contained these blocks in one solid form, the red outline of which can be traced around the group of the three figures. We identify the Virgin according to her pink tunic and green-lined blue drapery, and Joseph by his dark grey tunic and yellow-to-red *cangiante* drape. And it is to colour that we must look when areas are uncertain: for example, we are able to identify the bunch of drapery to the lower right of the Virgin's left shoulder as belonging to Joseph as it is the same yellow to red *cangiante* as the drapery over his right knee.

Michelangelo created relief with the pure colour modelling system which he would have learned in the Ghirlandaio studio, and which we can trace ultimately to Cennino. In fact, it is almost possible to catalogue Cennino's three bowls of colour in the Virgin's ultramarine drapery. He used the classic red to yellow *cangiante* to obtain relief for Joseph's yellow drape, and added a bit of yellow for highlight to the Virgin's green lining. We know from the restoration reports that he modelled with the light hue first and then laid the half-tones and shadows in successively, or in layers of glazes, as in the white lead, cinnabar and red lake used for the Virgin's pink tunic; the highlights of this tunic would presumably have been darker originally as the red lake will have faded with time.[17]

Michelangelo chose and arranged the hues of his palette so that the figures would be placed clearly in space; the white highlights of the Virgin's draperies make her seem nearer to the picture plane than the yellow highlights and dark blue of Joseph's. He created relief with each pigment in the traditional modelling hues (for example: red to yellow, or adding white to blue) and this simple palette simply arranged gives the painting its unity and harmony. The drapery of the central figures appears against a simple background of blue sky, the skin tone of the nude figures and green grass. It is notable that the overall tonality of the *Doni Tondo* has more in common with Ghirlandaio's fresco palette than with his palette for panel paintings in terms of the amount of white or light tonalities added to create highlights. This becomes clear if we compare the Virgin's blue drapery to many of the blues in the two *Adorations* or the Uffizi *Madonna and Child with Saints* previously discussed.

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17 See Buzzegoli, "Colourist": 408.

This continual and conscious emphasising of relief in all areas is in line with Michelangelo's attitude to painting as we know it from his writings; this will be more fruitfully examined after having looked at colour use in the Sistine Chapel as well. In fact, the *Doni Tondo* can really be seen as a very similar statement in painting to Michelangelo's later work in fresco, only made in a different medium. In the *tondo*, Michelangelo reserved his new innovations for figure design, while in terms of colour he relies more heavily on late fifteenth century Florentine colour modelling as we have seen in the Tornabuoni chapel. It is also important as it is the only painting Michelangelo finished in Florence, and that it remained there is another important factor, particularly for accessibility to Rosso and Pontormo, and for the influence of its fully saturated colour use.

By May 1508 Michelangelo had an established, if somewhat difficult relationship with Pope Julius II resulting from the commission for the latter's tomb. It should not be surprising that Michelangelo expressed reluctance when in that month the Pope asked him to hold off on the tomb project and fresco the ceiling of the Sistine chapel. The work in the chapel progressed with surprising rapidity, with work most likely taking place from 10th May 1508 through the Pope's departure from Rome for Bologna on 10th August 1510; the first half was revealed on 15th August 1511, then work resumed and the entire chapel was unveiled in October 1512.[18] Although this portion of the dating of the work is quite complex, the main point is that there was likely a break in August/September 1510 and that by 15th August 1511 Michelangelo moved the scaffolding or *ponte* and thereby had a chance to view the first half of his work, as it would be seen by the spectator.[19] Restorers and scholars comment on the stylistic break between the *Creation of Eve* and the *Temptation and Fall* and this break will be an issue throughout the subsequent discussion.[20]

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18 For the recent and complicated debate on the exact dating of the work, and on the scaffolding see: Creighton E. Gilbert, "On the absolute dates of the parts of the Sistine Ceiling," *Art History* 3 (1980): 158-181; Frederick Hartt, "The evidence for the scaffolding of the Sistine Ceiling," *Art History* 5 (1982): 272-286. For further information see: Fabrizio Mancinelli, "La technique de Michel-Ange et les problèmes de la Chapelle Sixtine: La *Création d'Eve* et le *Péché originel*," *Revue de l'Art* 81 (1988): 9-19 and idem, "The Technique of Michelangelo as a Painter: a note on the cleaning of the first lunettes in the Sistine Chapel," trans. Anthony M. Sutton, *Apollo* 117 (1983): 362.

19 On the scaffolding, see Gilbert, "Sistine," and Hartt, "scaffolding," and for the physical evidence which confirmed Hartt's hypothesis, and further discussion see: Fabrizio Mancinelli, "Il ponteggio di Michelangelo," in Mancinelli & Morello: 61-2. Condivi writes that "as soon as the work was half done ... he wanted Michelangelo to uncover [*scoprisse*] it while it was still incomplete [*imperfette*] ...": Condivi, 57; for the Italian, see Cast, 681. On Michelangelo's probable dependence on Bramante for assistance with the *ponte* design, see: Charles Robertson, "Bramante, Michelangelo and the Sistine Ceiling," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 49 (1986): 91-105.

20 See for example John K.G. Shearman, "Developments in the Use of Colour in Tuscan Painting of the Early Sixteenth Century." Ph.D. diss., University of London, 1957; Mancinelli,

When Michelangelo was commissioned to fresco the vault of the Sistine chapel, he had been in Rome on and off since June 1496, yet on 13th May 1508 he still found it necessary to write to Florence for a quantity of azure.[21] It seems difficult to believe that someone active in artistic circles in Rome would find it necessary to write to Florence for varnish and pigments, and later, assistants. At this stage, information is not known about the availability of specific pigments in specific areas. Therefore, although we do not know about the relative availability of azure in Rome as compared to Florence, it does seem important that Michelangelo felt it necessary to write to Florence to obtain a mineral pigment.[22] There are perhaps two reasons for this: first, that Michelangelo, as we have discussed in the first chapter, had little interest in painting and had not felt the need or desire to discover where in Rome he might obtain painting materials; second, his own training had been in Florence and when faced with this huge and to him onerous task, he turned to familiar sources and connections which he had made and maintained in the Ghirlandaio *bottega*. That this training gave him his grounding in technique and style when he began in the Sistine has been and should not be underestimated.

All of the restorers and subsequent scholars writing in favour of the cleaned results of the Sistine ceiling comment on Michelangelo's technical excellence. There is no question that, after working through the initial problems he had with the *intonaco*, Michelangelo executed the frescoes with mastery, and it is in fact this skill which we have to thank for the condition in which the frescoes have survived today.[23] However, having never painted a fresco on his own and not having had exposure to work in fresco since his apprenticeship other than the planning for the Battle of Cascina fresco, it would be a mistake to think that he would immediately be able to create such technically flawless frescoes. Here again, we must remind ourselves of his training with Ghirlandaio and of the fact that Michelangelo's assistants in the early stages of work at the Sistine -- all trained artists in fresco and having had continual exposure to work in that medium -- almost all came from that studio.[24]

"Création": 10; Gianluigi Colalucci, "Esecuzione pittorica," in Mancinelli & Morello, 75; idem, "Gli affreschi della volta sistina. La tecnica di esecuzione," in *Trionfo*, 33.

21 See Michelangelo, *Letters*, 1:45, doc. 41 and above, note 4.

22 Fabrizio Mancinelli has recently suggested that due to the quantities of azure requested Michelangelo intended to use the Florentine pigment as a sample and acquire greater quantities in Rome; this does not however negate his reliance on Florence for pigment sources: see Fabrizio Mancinelli, "Tecnica di Michelangelo e organizzazione del lavoro," in Mancinelli & Morello, 55-59.

23 See for example Colalucci in *Trionfo*, 26 and Mancinelli, "Tecnica" in Mancinelli & Morello, 55.

24 See Wallace, "Assistants": 203-216; Fabrizio Mancinelli, "Michelangelo: il problema degli aiuti," in *Trionfo*, 46ff and Mancinelli, "Création": *passim* and briefly on Ghirlandaio's place in the fresco tradition see Colalucci in *Trionfo*, 26-28; Mancinelli, "Tecnica", in Mancinelli & Morello, 55 and Shearman, "Funzioni," 82, 86, 87; briefly on Ghirlandaio's relationship to rapid painting in fresco, see Mancinelli, "Création": 12.

One of the important aspects of Michelangelo's technique is the control he kept over the frescoes given the extremely rapid pace at which they were painted; this is something for which his apprenticeship would not necessarily have prepared him, and it is also one of the ways in which his work in the Sistine is particularly innovative. The pressure put on him by the Pope throughout the work there certainly accounts for his quick progress; however, despite his intial reluctance, he took to the work quickly and even extended the labour by revising the earlier programme of only twelve apostles.[25] These factors produced some of the most startling images from the ceiling, particularly the lunettes, done in three days each. It is important at this point to look more closely at what colour style or use all of this produced before looking at some of the broader implications, and at evidence from other areas, such as his writings, for his attitudes towards colour.[26]

The most obvious way in which Michelangelo used colour in the Sistine ceiling was to organise or differentiate between the four main sections of the ceiling: the lunettes with the Ancestors of Christ; the Prophets and Sibyls seated above the lunettes; the four corner spandrels; and the complex central narrative band with the Genesis scenes framed by ignudi. A fictive architectural framework unites the compositional structure of the ceiling, but Michelangelo distinguished between these four main areas with colour.[27] A very limited palette of mauve for the draperies, yellow, green, and blue unites the Genesis scenes; this simple palette allows us to follow the narrative development and is only highlighted by certain dramatic passages of hue, such as the *cangiante* coils of the serpent in the *Temptation* (Fig. 25). Because of the low key of colour in comparison to the rest of the vault, these areas will not be discussed as much as the following three areas. The second area, the Prophets and Sibyls, unlike the Genesis scenes, is characterised by vibrantly coloured draperies and intricate costumes covering figures which appear much larger in scale in relation to the Genesis scenes. The odd shapes of the spandrels and the unusual compositions which result contain some of the most dramatic concentrations of pure colour and colour change modelling, and as Shearman has noted, these areas are comprehensible almost exclusively because of this colour.[28] And finally, Michelangelo focused our attention on the lunettes by setting figures created with colour change modelling against a plain violet background, making them legible in awkward viewing

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25 On his reluctance to take up the project, see above, n. 2.

26 For some of the recent post-restoration writings on Michelangelo's use of colour, beyond technique, in the Sistine, see: Shearman, *Trionfo, passim*; Hall, *Meaning*, 123ff.

27 See Hall, *Meaning*, 125-6.

28 Shearman, "Funzioni," 88.

conditions.[29] That Michelangelo differentiated between these areas using colour against the unifying fictive architecture indicates that even at the most basic level colour was an important tool for him. It also highlights the reasons for our focus on the Prophets and Sibyls, the spandrels, and the lunettes over the Genesis scenes. Hall has indicated another important aspect of this organisational system, and that is that it can be read as an example of *contropposto* colour composition. In an overall sense this is true but should not be stressed too strongly as Michelangelo does not seem colouristically to have planned the ceiling out as a whole from the beginning; this will become clearer in the subsequent discussion.[30]

Another point which characterises Michelangelo's colour style in the Sistine is his attitude towards light, both real light coming into the chapel from the windows, and light as it is used within the images. The windows in the chapel make for particularly awkward viewing conditions, especially for the lunettes, for to see them we must look into the window below. As to the rest of the ceiling, it is never and was never to be -- in the original lighting conditions -- directly lit, and so its distance from the viewer, the intrusion of the light coming from the windows to the ground and the oblique angle at which most of the work must be seen also make that area difficult to view. It was again to colour that Michelangelo looked to solve these problems. As we have seen in Filippino Lippi's work in the Carafa chapel, Michelangelo used fully saturated hues -- and in the case of the lunettes and spandrels fully saturated hues employed in colour changes to create relief -- to ensure that the painted forms will be distinguishable when seen from anywhere on the floor of the chapel. He used strength of hue rather than black and white to make each form visible.

Within the images, Michelangelo used light to create relief, to define and create form.[31] He does not use it to create atmosphere or specific types of light, even in scenes such as *The Separation of Light and Darkness* (Fig. 27), where it could be done. Light is portrayed as directional, with the altar wall rather than the actual windows as the "fictive" source, although this can sometimes only be determined by looking at cast shadows and not at the modelling in the figures, for example those made by the feet of the *Erithrean Sibyl* (Fig. 26); this indicates not only a reaction to normal orthodox approaches to illusionism, but also hints at the difficulty of creating a unified lit whole on a curved and complex surface. The prophets and sibyls, projecting into the room on their thrones, are the most brightly lit figures, and also carry the strongest highlights; this light level *vis-à-vis* modelling decreases as we

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29 Ibid., 87; for an alternate interpretation of the clothing in the lunettes in relation specific Jewish costumes, see Edward Maeder, "I costumi degli antenati di Cristo," in *Trionfo*, 194ff.

30 Hall, *Meaning*, 127-8.

31 On this function of colour in the Sistine, see Shearman, "Funzioni," 84ff.

move towards the altar wall from the figures on the entrance wall. It is also important that Michelangelo placed the figures, except those in the Genesis scenes and to some extent the spandrels, alone against a relatively simple background; this allows their forms -- and the colour which creates them -- not to be interfered with; contrast this with the *Doni Tondo*, in which the complicated background of nudes, grass and sky necessitated control of the visibility of the central figures. All of this shows Michelangelo's indifference to representing the chapel's natural light in the images, and his concern with overall visibility of the work. It also demonstrates that as the work developed (towards the altar wall) his interest became less in showing relief and more in portraying the plasticity of form; this idea will be developed further in relation to his specific modelling techniques. It is important to keep in mind that his concern was always with the legibility of the figures, the protagonists in his work, from the floor of the chapel.

This strong light creates figures which are not only clearly visible but also modelled in a very sculptural way, much like the figures in the *Doni Tondo*; the choice of simple backgrounds helps in this. As has been discussed above, a figure's place in the ceiling determines, to some extent, the type of modelling which creates his or her drapery, for example the *cangianti* in the lunettes make the figures there more visible. However, we also need to look at Michelangelo's modelling techniques separate from these locational constraints. At this point it should not be at all surprising that Michelangelo began with the colour modelling tradition taught to him by Ghirlandaio and still used by other Florentine artists such as Filippino Lippi. It is perhaps the fluidity with which Michelangelo combined colour change and saturation change modelling, and the incredibly broad range in which he used and developed both modes which represent his greatest advancement in terms of colour in the Sistine vault.

Michelangelo modelled all of his figures with the pigments needed for good *buon fresco* technique, resulting in an overall impression of brilliantly saturated hues; this point hardly needs belabouring as the brightness of the colours caused such a stir when the first cleaned images appeared to the public.[32] Throughout his work in the vault Michelangelo used both the colour change and saturation change systems of colour modelling to obtain full relief in his figures; the specific way in which he did

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32 For a list of the pigments, see Nazzareno Gabrielli & Fabio Morresi, "Ricerche tecnico-scientifiche sugli affreschi di Michelangelo," in Mancinelli & Morello, 116-7 and Nazzareno Gabrielli, "Aspetti scientifici nel restauro degli affreschi di Michelangelo nella Cappella Sistina," *Monumenti, Musei e Gallerie Pontificie, Bollettino* 7 (1987), 151ff; the latter also gives the chemical makeup of AB-57, the solution used in the cleaning as: bicarbonate of amonia (NH_4HCO_3), 25g/litre; bicarbonate of sodium ($NaHCO_3$), 25g/litre; "desogen" (which has a "bactericidal" and "*antimicotica*" action), 10cc. in a 10% solution; and carbomethylcellulose.

this changed for a variety of reasons.[33] And it is in this area that for our purposes, the distinction between the first and second halves of the ceiling is most clear and most revealing.

In the first few prophets and sibyls, especially the *Delphic Sibyl* (Fig. 28) and *Zecharias* (Fig. 29), each piece of drapery has a distinct hue: for example, Zecharias wears a green mantle with red lining and a golden yellow tunic with a blue collar; the Delphic Sibyl wears a red-to-yellow mantle with blue lining, a green-to-yellow dress and a blue headcovering. Each of these areas is clearly distinguishable, and both colour and saturation change modelling appear in the same figure. Both are closely analogous to the drapery in the *Doni Tondo*, but also to some of Ghirlandaio's figures in the Tornabuoni chapel. In particular, Michelangelo models each of the hues in the Delphic Sibyl's drapery in the same way as the draperies in the *Doni Tondo*: the yellow has red shadows, blue has white highlights and green has yellow highlights. These particular hue changes and saturation changes do not remain consistent throughout the ceiling; the covering over the Erithrean Sibyl's knees changes from blue to green to yellow to white, and Isaiah's sleeves are yellow with lilac shadows.

The use of colour change modelling becomes more pronounced and dramatic in the second half of the vault, after the 1510 break. This is not necessarily a constant from the *Cumean Sibyl* and *Ezekiel* onwards. In fact, these first two figures have an almost "dull" palette with no fully saturated hues and no colour change modelling save for the Cumean Sibyl's gold mantle (Fig. 30) which does not initially even seem to be done in that manner. In the drapery of the figures following these two, we have an outburst of striking *cangiante* beginning with the Persian Sibyl's lilac to pink to white mantle, in which each hue is clearly distinguished one from the other. Then we have the frequently commented-upon drapery over Daniel's knee which in the lower area is red to white saturation change and in the top is striking green to yellow hue change, with the green only appearing in areas of deep shadow, and a variation in the yellow tones of the lit areas. The *Libyan Sibyl* (Fig. 31) presents perhaps the most striking instance of dramatic hue change modelling: her underskirt changes from deep reddish-maroon in the few darkest shadows through lilac and blue to white. The overskirt initially presents a challenge: the underside is modelled with a pale red to white saturation change; however, the top side -- and here it is unclear whether it is the same piece of fabric or a lining -- changes from the same deep reddish maroon in the underskirt through the same pale red as the underside to yellow highlights, with a touch of white on her left hip to indicate the brightest area of light. If we take the pale red as the standard hue, Michelangelo demonstrates how to model it using both the

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33 For a detailed discussion on colour change in the Sistine, and on the functions of colour, see Shearman, "Funzioni": 84-88; for the argument that Michelangelo represents shot silk with his *cangiante* see Meader, 196ff.

saturation change and hue change systems in the same figure. It seems that Michelangelo made an almost virtuosic display of the various ways to get different and beautiful colour effects with very limited pigments or hues. Furthermore, it is here that he broke with the idea that individual forms or parts of forms can be identified by their own hue, for there seems to be no specific local hue. This same idea resurfaces in *Jonah* (Fig. 32), where the palette contains only a few hues: maroon, green and lilac which appear throughout the entire image from tunic to fish scales; and yet with these three hues he managed to create one of the most striking and arresting images in the chapel. This is in no way to suggest that Michelangelo had a programme for colour and for modelling systems from the beginning which developed throughout the course of his work on the vault; rather, he learned as he went, developing all the while the different and various ways to model forms and create relief using his palette of pigments suited for fresco, and portraying figures in every tone from fully saturated to areas where even the shadows seem to contain some degree of white. It is important that his interest focuses in these areas -- in using hue to create relief -- not in creating any sort of specific lit atmosphere.

At this stage, a brief look at Michelangelo's attitude towards colour as revealed in his writings can not only give supporting evidence for his disposition with regards colour but also broaden our knowledge of the degree to which colour might have been part of his aim in the Sistine vault. One of the most illuminating writings in terms of colour is his well-known letter to Messer Giovan Francesco Fantucci, chaplain at Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence written in December 1523, outlining the state of Michelangelo's relationship with Pope Julius II, the events of which are repeated in one way or another by both Condivi and later Vasari in the 1568 edition of his *Vite*.[34] The second important writing for our purposes is Michelangelo's letter to Benedetto Varchi written in March 1547 from Rome in response to the latter's query about the supremacy of painting or sculpture.[35]

A great deal of information can be gained from the comment made, variously attributed to Michelangelo or Julius II that the figures would look "poor". In the

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34 For the Fantucci letter, Michelangelo, *Carteggio*, 3: Doc. 594 (Florence, Archivio Buonarroti, V, n. 39)and 595 (London, British Museum, Add. Ms. 23208, c. 1); Barocchi, *Carteggio*, 262-3, Doc. MLXXX and 264, Doc. MLXXXI give fragmentary versions of the same letter. See Michelangelo, *Letters*, Doc. 157, 148-9, for the English translation of *Carteggio* 3:594. For the Vasari and Condivi accounts see: Vasari/Barrocchi, 6:33 for the Italian and Vasari/Bull, 1:353 for the English version. For a summary of the Vasari and Condivi descriptions and a discussion of the idea of "finish", see David Cast, "Finishing the Sistine," *Art Bulletin* 78 (1991): 669-684; he also publishes the Condivi and Vasari narratives in both the Italian original and the English translation.

35 For the Italian version of this letter, see Michelangelo, *Carteggio*, 3:265-6, Doc. MLXXXII; for the English translation, see Michelangelo, *Letters*, 2:75, Doc 280.

earliest Fantucci letter Michelangelo writes that at the beginning of the work in the Sistine is seemed to him that:

> ... it would turn out a poor affair, and I told the Pope that if the Apostles alone were put there it seemed to me that it would turn out a poor affair. He asked me why. I said, because they themselves were poor.[36]

In the second draft Michelangelo leaves out the exchange regarding the Apostles themselves being poor. In both drafts the issue at stake at this point in the story seems to be the amount of decoration or number of images on the ceiling; however the further implication is that if poor people are shown in their simple and rough drapery without the use of expensive pigments and perhaps gold, the paintings would therefore seem poor.[37] It also may be that Michelangelo looked to colour as a way of making the images appear more rich and luxurious. The change in subject and subsequent use of gold and rich colours may have resulted from this early concern with the images appearing poor, and therefore not suitable for the Papal chapel.

There is also the additional problem of the variances in the Condivi and Vasari narratives. Both were written approximately forty or more years after the fact -- as the Fantucci letter was written over ten years after the fact -- and both authors had clear purposes beyond simply relating the narrative of Michelangelo's life.[38] Condivi, supposedly giving the truth straight from Michelangelo's mouth, relates this comment as being made at the end of the work on the chapel, after the All Saints' Day unveiling:

> It lacked retouching [*rittocarla*] with ultramarine *a secco* and in one or two places with gold, which would have made it appear richer [*paresse più ricca*]. Julius, whose fervour [*fervore*] had calmed down, now wished Michelangelo to provide this; but Michelangelo, considering the bother that he would have in reassembling the scaffolding properly, replied that what was lacking [*mancava*] was nothing of importance [*cose che importasse*]. "It must still be necessary [*Bisognerebbe*] to have it retouched with gold," replied the Pope; and Michelangelo, talking familiarly, as he used to with His Holiness, said: "I do not see that men should wear gold." And the Pope: "It will look (be) poor [*La sarà povera*]." Then "Those who are painted here," Michelangelo replied, "were poor themselves [*fuoron poveri ancor essi*]." So he turned things into a joke, and it has remained as it was.[39]

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36 Michelangelo, *Letters*, 1:148-9, Doc. 157; Michelangelo, *Carteggio*, 3:Doc 594: " ... *mi parve riuscissi cosa povera, e disse al Papa chome, facendovi gli Appostoli soli, mi parea che riuscissi cosa povera. Mi domandò perché: io gli dissi: 'Perché furon poveri anche loro'.*

37 My thanks to Professor Martin Kemp for bringing this reading of this passage to my attention.

38 Cast: 674. (Vasari/Barocchi, 6:38 and Vasari/Bull, 1:353.) As Cast has noted, this can be read either as a comment on the poor quality of the work of art or as a way to say a contentious thing in a less contentious manner; he cites the Fantucci letter as connecting "*una cosa povera*" with undecorated.

39 Cast, 674: "*Mancava il rittoccarla coll'azzurro oltramarino a secco, e con oro in qualche luogo, perchè paresse più ricca. Giulio, passatto quel fervore, voleva pur che Michelangnolo la fornisse; ma egli considerando l'impaccio, che avrebbe avuto in rimettere in ordine il palco,*

Vasari, who wanted to establish Michelangelo as the preeminent artist of his time, and who also wanted to show his intimacy with Michelangelo, relates in his 1568 edition that again, after the final unveiling:

> Michelangelo wanted to retouch some parts of the painting *a secco*, as the old masters had done on the scenes below painting backgrounds, draperies, and skies in ultramarine and in certain places adding ornamentation in gold, in order to enrich and heighten the visual impact. The Pope, learning this ornamentation was lacking, and hearing the work praised so enthusiastically by all who saw it, wanted him to go ahead. However, he lacked the patience to rebuild the scaffolding and so the ceiling stayed as it was. His holiness used to see Michelangelo often and he would ask him to have the chapel enriched with colours and gold, since it looked impoverished. And Michelangelo would answer familiarly: "Holy Father, in those days men did not bedeck themselves in gold and those you see painted there were never very rich. They were holy men who despised riches."[40]

A variety of reasons could account for the disparity between the earlier account to Fantucci and the later Vasari and Condivi versions; certainly we must consider what was important to Michelangelo at the time he related each version. In the letter to Fantucci, he was more concerned with relating the simple narrative himself for financial purposes; in the later versions he told the story to someone else (Condivi) or they have stated their version of the truth (Vasari). We not only have to consider his complicated relationship with the Papacy by this stage but also both Vasari's and Condivi's motives. Furthermore, it seems the later authors have taken a witty and insightful exchange and adapted it to their impression of and aims in dealing with the relationship between the two main figures.[41] For example, in the earlier letter to Fantucci, the discussion with the Pope took place at the beginning of the work in the Sistine; fgor this reason the debate results in the fact that the original programme of the twelve apostles was changed. Condivi and Vasari move the debate to the end of work in the chapel, and use it as a justification for the fact that ultramarine *a secco*

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rispose, che quel che le mancava, non era cosa che importasse. "Bisognerebbe pur rittoccarla d'oro" rispose il Papa: cui Michelagnolo fimaliarmente, come soleva con Sua Santità: "Io non veggio, che gli uomini portino oro." E 'l Papa: "La sarà povera." "Quei, che sono quivi dipinti," rispose egli, "furon poveri ancor essi," Così si buttò in burla, ed è cosi rimasta."

40 Vasari/Barocchi, 6:38: "*Desiderava Michelangnolo ritocare alcune cose a secco, come avevon fatto que' maestri vecchi nelle storie di sotto: certi campi e panni et arie di azzurro oltramarino, et ornamenti di'oro in qualche luogo, acciò gli desse più ricchezza e maggior vista; per che, avendo inteso il Papa che ci mancava ancor questo, desideraba, sentendola lodar tanto da chi l'aveva vista, che la fornissi; ma perché era troppa lunga cosa a Michelangnolo, gli diceva: "Che la Cappella si arricchisca di colori e d'oro, che l'è povera". Michelangnolo con domestichezza rispondeva: "Padre Santo, in quel tempo gli uomini non portavano addosso oro, e quegli che son dipinti non furon mai troppo ricchi, ma santi uomini, perché gli sprez[z]aron le ricchezze.*"

41 For an expansion of these ideas and further discussion on the relationship between Michelangelo and Julius, see Cast: 674ff.

touches and gold were not applied, regardless of whether or not they were planned. The question of finish and "*l'ultima mano*" have been so thoroughly treated recently in relation to the restoration that for our purposes we will not add more to this complicated debate.[42]

If we take Michelangelo's relating of the events in the Fantucci letter as indicative of the reasons for the change in the programme for the vault, then it seems perhaps his fresco technique and use of pigments had certainly ensured long lasting and powerful images without the need of further, less stable *a secco* painting; the use of some gold on the thrones for the Prophets and Sibyls remains an exception to this in the background. His main concern seems to always be that the force of the figures carries through, as we have already seen in his emphasis on legibility. These sorts of concerns may have continued throughout the work in the chapel; Cast's idea rings true that the Condivi and Vasari reports are perhaps generally but not specifically reliable and that in the Renaissance plausibility, or the fact that something could or might be correct, equals truth.[43] I would suggest then that for our purposes it is important that we consider that the conversation actually happened early in the conception of the vault decoration, that it implies a lack of interest in gold *a secco* work, that the fully saturated hues may have been used to make up for this lack, and that the words said were adapted later to suit other needs.

In mentioning Michelangelo's concern with the power of the figures carrying across the space to the viewer, we have already alluded to the main issue in the second written source to be considered, Michelangelo's 1547 letter to Benedetto Varchi. In this letter, Michelangelo responds that "painting may be held to be good in the degree in which it approximates relief, and relief to be bad in the degree in which it approximates painting."[44] He goes on to add:

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42 Interestingly, these types of later additions appear throughout the Tornabuoni chapel, down to gilded stucco relief. For a detailed discussion of the whole problem in relation to the Vasari and Condivi accounts and the question of finish, see: Cast: 669-684. In favour of the addition of this final layer see: James Beck & Michael Daley, *Art Restoration: The Culture, the Business, the Scandal* (London: 1993), 63ff; idem, ""New" Colour on the Sistine Ceiling and Other Issues, *Arts Magazine* 61 (1987): 72-73; idem, "The Sistine Restorations: Second Thoughts," *Arts Magazine* 61 (1987): 60-62; idem, "The Final Layer: "*L'ultima mano*" on Michelangelo's Sistine Ceiling," *Art Bulletin* 70 (1988): 502-503; and against, see: Frederick Hartt, "*L'ultimo mano* on the Sistine Ceiling, *Art Bulletin* 71 (1989): 508-9; (editorial), "A view from the *ponte*," *Burlington Magazine* 129 (November 1987): 708; David Ekserdjian, "The Sistine Ceiling and the Critics," *Apollo* 117 (1983): 401-404; Kathleen Weil-Garris Brandt [Posner], "Twenty-five Questions about Michelangelo's Sistine Ceiling," *Apollo* 117 (1983): 392 & 395; Colalucci, *Trionfo*, 26; Fabrizio Mancinelli, Gianluigi Colalucci, Nazzareno Gabrielli, "The restoration of the Sistine Chapel," *Scienza & Tecnica*, (1987): 3-4.

43 Cast, 680-1.

44 Michelangelo, *Letters*, 75. For the Italian, Barocchi, *Carteggio*, 265: "*... la pictura mi par più tenuta buona quante più va verso il rilievo, e el rilievo più tenuto cactivo, quante più va verso il pictura ...*"

> Now, since I have read the passage in your paper where you say that, philosophically speaking, things which have the same end are one and the same, I have altered my opinion and maintain that, if in the face of greater difficulties, impediments and labours, greater judgement does not make for greater nobility, then painting and sculpture are one and the same ... By sculpture I mean that which is fashioned by cutting away, that which is fashioned by the method of building up being like unto painting.[45]

He concludes by saying that both are part of the "same faculty of understanding" and the dispute over which is greater should be stopped.[46]

Although these observations come some forty-five years after his work in the Sistine chapel, a comparison of the attitude taken here with that revealed in his earlier paintings, demonstrates the continued existence of a similar attitude on the part of the artist. Michelangelo's constant concern in both the *Doni Tondo* and the Sistine was to create strongly three-dimensional figures; his ability to use a great variety of colour modelling techniques consistently to create figures which completely stand out from their backgrounds is commented on throughout any analysis of his frescoes. It is a volume created not by these figures' presence in a clearly lit atmosphere or in a convincingly represented space, but by their own specific and unique relief (in no way do we ask what goes on behind them). He additionally turned to perspective and surrounding figures to reinforce this appearance of three dimensionality. It is important here that Michelangelo made no distinction between painting and sculpture, and that he actually saw painting and additive sculpture as one and the same, and that he felt the only difference between these two and subtractive sculpture existed in the effort required by subtractive sculpture -- and for him this certainly meant carving marble. As he made no mention of colour in his argument, we can assume that he saw colour merely as another medium for creating relief; by stepping up the colour levels, he can therefore step up the visual impact of the relief so desirable to him. For him the question of illusion did not necessarily enter into the heart of the debate and the beauty and expressiveness of which colour was capable would merely be evident and therefore not need discussion.

This finally leads us to the ultimately unanswerable question of how Michelangelo thought of colour. It would seem from at least these two excerpts that colour in and of itself did not enter into his attitudes regarding painting as a separately considered entity. He certainly, as a painter and as someone trained by an artist like

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45 Michelangelo, *Letters*, 75; Barocchi, *Carteggio*, 265-6: "*Ora, poi che io ò lecto nel vostro Librecto dove dite che, parlando filosoficamente, quelle chose che ànno un medesimo fine sono una medesima cosa, io mi son mutato d'openione e dico che, se maggiore g[i]udicio e dificultà, impedimento e fatica non fa maggiore nobilità, che la pictura e scultura è una medesima cosa ... Io intendo scultura quella che si fa per forza di levare; quella che si fa per via di porre è simile ala pittura.*"

46 Barocchi, *Carteggio*, 266: "*... da una medesima intelligentia ...*"

Ghirlandaio for whom colour was so important, would be aware of it as an integral component in the visual impact of painting. However, it seems that Michelangelo saw colour, and therefore paint and painting, as a means to an end, like marble. Colour for Michelangelo was the most direct way in painting to ensure that a figure have full relief and that it be visible and legible; this guarantees that the expressiveness of the form will not be lost. The fact that for Michelangelo the link between the expressiveness of the forms and the expressiveness of the hues which create them was not necessarily a foremost interest does not in any way negate the importance of this connection as seen by later artists such as Pontormo.

Michelangelo should be seen as a colourist and more importantly a Florentine one, not necessarily because of his love of colour, but for the advances in colour which his concern with legibility and relief caused him to make. It is clear from his writings that he did not spend an inordinate amount of time thinking about pigments and hues, but it is also clear from his paintings that these things were important to him. For Michelangelo, the basic materials of any artistic medium could be used to obtain sculptural form; as he had been taught -- and well taught by his master Ghirlandaio -- the proper use of pigments in fresco, oil or tempera resulted in fully saturated hues. It is important that when returning to painting, he did not stray from this idea.

Yet it would be a mistake to think that his colour style was simply a repetition of the lessons learned in his early days. When given a painting commission, whether it be a small panel for a friend or a chapel for a Pope, Michelangelo made bold statements, as always, with form. It is important for our purposes that these forms were created with pure hues. Both his overriding preoccupation with relief and his concern with the idea that the vault decorations be visible from long distances and in awkward lighting conditions controls the way in which he presents his figures. It is through the modelling techniques he used to create these figures that he made his greatest contributions to early sixteenth century colour use. Granted, his manner of modelling forms changes dramatically from the carefully laid down colour and saturation changes bound to local hue in the *Doni Tondo* to the dramatic and somewhat illogical *cangiante* of the *Libyan Sibyl*, but it is just this variety and dynamism in his use of colour that makes him so important for subsequent artists.

CHAPTER FOUR

FRA BARTOLOMMEO AND THE SAN MARCO *COMPAGNIA*

Michelangelo played a central role in the development of Florentine painting due to his training and continual interest in the art of his native city. For the topic at hand however, we must shift focus away from Rome and back to Florence and the work being done there. The group of artists whom the next two chapters will explore, Baccio della Porta, later Fra Bartolommeo (c.1474-c.1517), his periodic partner Mariotto Albertinelli, and finally Andrea del Sarto (1486-1530), generally have been credited with creating and embodying the Florentine High Renaissance style.[1] It is to their work that we must now turn, not as antitheses to Michelangelo's work, but rather as exemplars of what was being done in Florence after other artists -- for a variety of reasons -- moved to Rome. During the period in which Fra Bartolommeo, Albertinelli and Andrea worked, Florence saw fundamental changes not only in style but also in politics and in exposure to outside influences.

With regard to style, the training of all of these artists began in late fifteenth century workshops in a similar environment to that of Ghirlandaio's: Fra Bartolommeo and Albertinelli in Cosimo Rosselli's workshop under the guidance of Piero di Cosimo, and, somewhat later, Andrea in Piero di Cosimo's or perhaps Rossellino's *bottega*.[2] It is important that each artist moved on from these *botteghe* to create their own studios and associated styles. Fra Bartolommeo and Albertinelli, sometimes together and sometimes apart, established a workshop under the auspices of the Dominican monastery of San Marco; these ties existed not only because it was the Frate's own monastery, but also because many of the commissions came either directly or indirectly from there and it is for these reaons his style tends to be allied with that monastery.[3] Likewise, Andrea del Sarto and his *bottega* have strong ties

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1 To avoid confusion, the name Fra Bartolommeo will be used to refer to the artist throughout his career, although that name would not have been his until after he became a monk.

2 On Fra Bartolommeo's training, see Vasari/Barocchi, 4:89. On Andrea's see chapter 4. On the Rosselli workshop, see for example Mina Gregori, Antonio Paolucci & Cristina Acidini Luchinat, eds., *Maestri e Botteghe: pittura a Firenze alla fine del Quattrocento*, ex. cat. (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 1992), 104. For the relationship of the Albertinelli/Fra Bartolommeo "company" see: Ludovico Borgo, "The Works of Mariotto Albertinelli," (New York & London: Garland Publications, 1976; reprint of Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1968), 16.

3 For example: the order's help in his receiving the commission for the *God the Father with Sts. Catherine of Siena and Mary Magdalene* and in sorting out the ensuing problems over payment; the commission for the *Mystic Marriage* for their own church and the replacement for it once the original was sent to France; and various frescoes for around the living quarters: the *Christ and Pilgrims on the Road to Emmaus* (?) (listed by Fischer as now in the Ospizio della

with Santissima Annunziata, not due to a religious connection, but rather to the fact that his second studio with Franciabigio was in the nearby *Sapienza*, and that that monastery provided work not only for Andrea and Franciabigio, but also for Andrea's two most well-known associates, Rosso and Pontormo.[4] The location of Andrea's workshop quite near the Annunziata but also near San Marco provided connections for Andrea not only with the former monastery but with the artistic circles already being established there. It is after the creation of these two *botteghe* that they tend to be referred to as the San Marco school and the Santissima Annunziata school; the Rosselli were also based in the Santissima Annunziata area, strengthening the ties with Andrea's later studio. It is the two different colour styles produced by these masters which the following two chapters will examine. However, it is first helpful to remind ourselves of the climate in which they would have been working.

The changes brought about particularly by Fra Bartolommeo were also bound up in the political developments happening in Florence during this time. The early sixteenth century tends to be thought of as the period when the artistic centre in central Italy switched from Florence to Rome, giving Florence a somewhat peripheral role, unlike her formerly central one. There are two central reasons for this switch. First, the emphasis put by the Papacy on using the visual arts to establish its power, and second, the commissions which resulted from this emphasis. Florence's government changed with relative frequency during this period and with it the character of the city and the commissions. Fra Bartolommeo, because of his connections with the monastery of San Marco, and Albertinllei to a lesser extent, tended to be bound up with Republican governments in Florence while Andrea, particularly later in his career work was tied to the Medici, as was his pupil Pontormo.[5] This is particularly underlined by the artists' change in fortunes: Fra Bartolommeo's commissions greatly decreased once the Republic fell in September 1512 whereas Andrea's picked up a good deal once the Medici resumed control.

Any discussion of these artists should also raise the critical issue during this period of the increased exposure of Florentine art to outside influences. Both Fra

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Maddalena at Le Caldine outside Florence, however seen July 1994 outside Savonarola's cell in San Marco) originally over the door to the *foresteria* (guest rooms) of San Marco; the *St. Dominic* and four other lunette frescoes over the doors in the dormitory; the *St. Vincent Ferrer*, which hung in the arch over the dorr leading from the church to the sacristy and is now in the Museo di San Marco; see Chris Fischer, *Fra Bartolommeo: Master Draughtsman of the High Renaissance* (Rotterdam: Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, 1990), 141 and 199.

4 The *Sapienza* (or House of Knowledge) on the site of the present University of Florence, was founded by the Signoria in 1429 to house 50 poor students from outside Florence. See Eve Borsook, *The Companion Guide to Florence*, 5th ed., (London: 1988), 280. Previously the two had been in a studio in the Piazza del Grano at the intersection of via dei Leoni and via de' Neri, just behind the Palazzo Vecchio and the Uffizi.

5 On San Marco's connections with the Republican government, see Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 187.

Bartolommeo and Andrea travelled, the former to Rome and Venice and the latter to France and Rome. Their differing reactions to those experiences are vital to understanding the approach taken by various artists in Florence to images from abroad. However, it is important that unlike Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael, these artists made shorter journeys to see other work, always returning to Florence and remaining fundamentally Florentine in their outlook and style. The fact that they were able to visit but did not ultimately relocate to these places reminds us of the relative ease of travel during this time and of the great number of commissions still available in Florence. The reactions of these artists and those around them to the influx of new influences attests to the relative solidity of a Florentine style during this period, and of these artists' relation to it. This raises the important point regarding the inherent "Florentine" style which is of course important for our investigations of Florentine colour modelling in that city. These issues will be dealt with in more detail in the following chapters.

These artists are being examined for different ends. As mentioned above, all art important for their travel abroad. Andrea del Sarto is central due to his close connection with Rosso and Pontormo, and his generally accepted pivotal role for sixteenth century colour. In the case of the San Marco *compagnia*, while they may not immediately seem to have a crucial role to play for Florentine colour due to their more *chiaroscuro*-filled images, their colour style needs to be understood for two reasons: first, both Fra Bartolommeo and Albertinelli at times chose to work in the colour modelling system and the reasons for that choice, in the face of other options, needs to be understood; and second, their darker colour style needs attention as a foil to the predominating trend of colour modelling carrying from Michelangelo through the SS. Annunziata school.

The chapters are not an attempt to discuss exhaustively the artists' colour style; rather, we must establish the directions that Florentine colour style, or more specifically Florentine colour modelling, took during this crucial developmental period, as opposed to the new Roman style. In order to do this, each artist will be treated separately, with Fra Bartolommeo and Albertinelli taking chronological precedence and treated in greater detail than his partner due to his exposure to outside influences as a result of his travels, and as a way of understanding how he would have translated those other styles for his fellow Florentines. This difference in terms of his exposure to influences and visibility in Florence means that his work will be explored in greater depth than Albertinelli. For all these artists the relevant large altarpieces and frescoes will be taken into consideration, with smaller works being brought into the discussion only when necessary. It is hoped that this type of discussion of the larger "showpieces" will help in the definition of the way in which colour was (or was not) being used to model forms during the 1510s and early 1520s in Florence.

As painters in the early sixteenth century Florence, the San Marco *compagnia* distilled many of the influences which went into making the style in the city what it was at that time; Fra Bartolommeo in particular had contact with Raphael, some of the major *botteghe*, and with main artistic centres such as Venice and Rome. However his colour style, while frequently experimental, focused neither on fully saturated colour nor on colour use which emphasised the nature of the pigments in the way in which Michelangelo's did or in which Andrea, Rosso and Pontormo's will be seen to. It is important to examine Fra Bartolommeo and Albertinelli in this context to understand their contributions to and relevance for the topic at hand.

Vasari tells us that both Fra Bartolommeo -- at that time Baccio della Porta -- and Albertinelli completed their apprenticeships with Cosimo Rosselli. Fra Bartolommeo's was apparently under the guidance of Piero di Cosimo, from about 1483-90/1.[6] It is also possible that Fra Bartolommeo was connected in some way with the Ghirlandaio studio early in his career.[7] At the beginning of Fra Bartolommeo's *Vita*, Vasari writes that:

> After he [Fra Bartolommeo] had left Cosimo Rosselli, he started to study with great liking the works of Leonardo da Vinci, and in a short time he made such fruitful progress in colouring that he acquired credit and reputation as one of the best young men of the art of painting, both in colouring and drawing.[8]

In fact, according to Freedberg, Fra Bartolommeo seems to maintain a debt to Leonardo's "character of modelling" throughout his career.[9] Vasari also makes specific mention of Fra Bartolommeo's contact with Raphael and the younger artist's interest in the Frate's colour style; this will also be discussed at the relevant point.

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6 See Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 33.

7 See Fahy, "Bartolommeo": 459-466. The connections here are somewhat uncertain as Fahy bases his conclusions on accepting the Volterra Cathedral *Annunciation* (inscr. 1497; Volterra: Cathedral) as by the Frate and thereby making a stylistic connection with the St. Vincent altarpiece (1493-4; Rimini, Pinacoteca Communale); he does offer as more convincing evidence the fact that Fra Bartolommeo copied from the Ghirlandaio workshop *Codex Escurialensis*. Lisa Venturini makes a connection between the Ghirlandaio bottega *Madonna in Glory with Saints* (c. 1492-4; Berlin: Kaiser Friedrich Museum) and the Frate's drawings, particularly with regards the kneedling Sts. Jerome and Francis: see Lisa Venturini, "Qualche novità e alcune considerazioni su due tavole ghirlandaiesche," *Paragone* 41 (1990): 67-76. Two documents related to the dispute over the payment for this work are published in Glasser, Appendix C, 301ff; no mention is made of Fra Bartolommeo.

8 On della Porta being under Piero di Cosimo's guidance, see Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite ...* ed. Gaetano Milanese (Florence: 1878-81): 175 . In general, see Vasari/Barocchi, 4:89 and Vasari/Bull, 2:116: "*Costui, doppo che si partì da Cosimo Rosselli, cominciò a studiare con grande affezzione le cose di Lionardo da Vinci, e in poco tempo fece tal frutto e tal progresso nel colorito che s'acquistò reputazione e credito d'uno de' miglior' giovani dell' arte, sì nel colorito come nel disegno.*"

9 See S[ydney] J. Freedberg, *Painting of the High Renaissance in Rome and Florence*, 2 vols., (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), 2:34.

Early in Fra Bartolommeo's career Mariotto Albertinelli appeared as an influence, the two meeting in the Rosselli *bottega*. They shared their first workshop near the San Piero Gattolino gate, in the Oltrarno near the Porta Romana, until 1493; later, from late 1508 to early 1513 they participated in a more concrete *compagnia* under the jurisdiction of the convent of San Marco, which was also located in that monastery.[10] Throughout their careers, these two artists had an intermittent working relationship; even when they had formal partnerships they did not always both work on the same paintings, although they shared the financial benefits and burdens. It was while he was with Albertinelli that Fra Bartolommeo executed his most important works; however, for the most part Albertinelli was not involved in the actual painting of the works which concern us. Albertinelli will reappear later as one of Pontormo's masters.[11]

The relationship of the San Marco *compagnia* to the Florentine Republic also played a central role in the stylistic development during this period in Florence. Although neither Fra Bartolommeo nor Albertinelli were in any way an official government artist as there were none, Fra Bartolommeo in particular did to some extent set the Florentine civic style at the same time that the Roman Papal style was being established by his compatriots in the south. His sadly unfinished *Pala del Gran Consiglio* (commissioned 1510 for the Sala del Gran Consiglio and now in the Museo di San Marco) would have been the centrepiece to Republican Florence's focus of activity and as such, together with Leonardo and Michelangelo's Battle scenes would have set the standard for Florentine art; as Vasari tells us the Battle cartoons became "*uno studio degli artefici*".[12] According to Hartt, the *Mona Lisa* typifies the "ideal Second Republic comportment: balanced, sober, restrained, un-ostentatious and very rich;"[13] it will later be argued that Fra Bartolommeo helped to establish the typical Second Republic decorum of colour, and would have made his supreme statement of it in the *Pala del Gran Consiglio*. After this period of relative political stability, the Republic fell; Fra Bartolommeo's work declined and he travelled more. The trip to Rome together with the earlier trip to Venice meant that Fra Bartolommeo brought outside influences to Florence but it is important that he always returned to work in the Florentine environment.

In order to examine the colour style of this school, the effect of these various factors on the work will be explored. At various points Fra Bartolommeo's connection with the Florentine Republic, his relationship with Albertinelli, his contact

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10 See Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 187.

11 Borgo throughout discusses the relative involvement of the two painters in the works; see: Borgo, "Works," passim.

12 Vasari/Barocchi, 6:25 and Vasari/Bull, 1:342.

13 Frederick Hartt, "Leonardo and the Second Florentine Republic," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 44 (1986): 106.

with Raphael, his travels and so on will come into play, however for clarity's sake his work will be examined in chronological order, with larger divisions being made according to breaks in his career such as the trip to Venice and the trip to Rome.

As discussed above, both Fra Bartolommeo and Albertinelli received their early training in the Rosselli workshop under the guidance of Piero di Cosimo. Early in his career, Fra Bartolommeo studied the works of Leonardo da Vinci, as well as copied from the *Codex Escurialensis*, associated with Ghirlandaio's studio. All these types of training would have given Fra Bartolommeo not only exposure to some of the major *botteghe* in Florence during that time but also to some of the main colour styles of the time and in particular the widely differing ones of Ghirlandaio and Leonardo. Through an examination of some of the important works done before his trip to Venice we can hopefully understand in what areas Fra Bartolommeo's interests lay.

Of the two main works from this period we have examples in both fresco and panel. Gerozzo Dini commissioned the *Last Judgement* (1499-1500; Florence: Museo di San Marco) (Fig. 33) on behalf of the Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova on 8 January, 1499 to decorate the wall over the grave of his mother in the Chiostro dell' Ossa in the Hospital. Fra Bartolommeo was unable to finish the mural by the time he took orders on 26 July 1500 and Albertinelli therefore finished it by 11 March 1501.[14] Unfortunately, the work suffered damage during its time in the cloister and is now largely ruined. Fortunately for us, Christ and the Apostles, the area on which Fra Bartolommeo worked survived in the best condition such that those parts are more visible than the rest of the fresco.

In these areas Fra Bartolommeo used the muted hues of rust, dark green and pale blue which we might expect in accordance with such a sober subject. Despite the near ruined condition, we can still detect evidence of Fra Bartolommeo's fairly sophisticated interest in using light to describe forms in the painting. It should not be surprising therefore that some of the studies for the *Last Judgement* are also drawn on linen, as those from the Ghirlandaio workshop; this again strengthens the connections between these two *botteghe*.[15] The palette chosen by Fra Bartolommeo to model

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[14] See Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 43-45. According to him the fresco was repainted in 1628 and restored in 1986-7. For the contract and record of payments see Christian von Holst, "Fra Bartolomeo und Albertinelli. Beobachtungen zu ihrer Zusammenarbeit am Jüngsten gericht aus S. Maria Nuova und in der Werkstatt von S. Marco," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 18 (1974): 273-318 and Borgo, "Works," 478-80 (Doc. 1).

[15] For example the study done for the Apostle on the far right (London: British Museum, inv. 5237-44; Fischer, *Draughtsman*, fig. 24) and particularly the studies for Christ (Rotterdam: Museum Boymans-van Beuningen Vol. N77; idem, cat. no. 6) and for the monk at lower right (Florence: Uffizi inv. 19197; idem, fig. 31, p. 71) which are drawn on linen; unfortunately the

these draperies in the fresco never reached the saturation level of the Ghirlandaio frescoes; he instead used mostly earth-hues such as rust and sage green. The modelling technique used, for example in the well-preserved Apostle to the right and the figure of the Virgin seems to be tonal, with addition of black to the rust or white hues to obtain relief; in all, a very different system from Ghirlandaio's. It seems that although Fra Bartolommeo possibly had exposure to the preparatory techniques being used in the Ghirlandaio shop, he was interested in modelling which related more to the effects of light and shade than to beauty and strength of colour. It should also be mentioned that it is unlikely that he had the same considerations regarding visibility as faced by Ghirlandaio since *Last Judgement* was for an outdoor cloister, where the hues he used would be suited to the environment, and the natural lighting fairly consistent and bright.

At this point in his career, Fra Bartolommeo fell under the influence of Savonarola; in Vasari's account he tells that the Frate destroyed many of his drawings in Savonarola's famous bonfire and vowed that if he escaped the attack on San Marco by opponents of Savonarola's that he would take up orders. On 26 July 1500 Baccio della Porta became Fra Bartolommeo of the order of San Domenico at Prato thereby, his friends believed, giving up his life as an artist.[16] After some time in Prato, Fra Bartolommeo was sent back to San Marco in Florence and it is there that he made his return to painting.

As Vasari writes, Fra Bartolommeo began work on the *Vision of St. Bernard* (c. 1504-6; Florence: Uffizi) (Fig. 34) under pressure from the abbot at San Marco and a patron called Bernardo del Bianco who wanted the painting for his own chapel in the Badia.[17] This work plays a central role for colour usage in two-sided compositions such as the *Annunciation* and the *Vision of St. Bernard* and an understanding of it is crucial for examining works by Filippino and Andrea. Extreme care must be used when discussing the colour in this work because a past cleaning project left the quickly and tentatively prepared left half of the painting severely damaged when compared to the elaborately prepared right half.[18] Unfortunately, this in a way negates the main observation about the painting regarding the disparity

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damage in this area of the fresco means that it is extremely difficult to compare Ghirlandaio's use of this type of drawing for fresco with that of Fra Bartolommeo.

16 For the Vasari quote see Vasari/Barocchi, 4:91ff and Vasari/Bull, 2:118-9; for more on Fra Bartolommeo's connections with Savonarola, see Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 96.

17 It was commissioned 18 November 1504 requiring a Madonna and Child with saints and delivered 17 July 1507. See Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 128-9. Relevant documents are published in Vincenzo Marchese, *Memorie dei più insigni Pittori, Scultori e Architetti Domenicani*, 2 vols. (Florence: A. Parenti, 1845-46), 2:410-15, Doc. 2 from Ricordanze del Convento di San Marco: [Libro dei Debitori e Creditori], c. 66.

18 Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 128-9.

between the colour style and modelling techniques in the two halves. The disparate style bears similarities to Filippino Lippi's treatment of the same subject (c. 1480; Florence: Badia) and Andrea del Sarto's *Annunciation* (c. 1512; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti) (Fig. 66).[19] In all of these paintings, there is a division between the heavenly apparition with angels on one side against the more earthly half, which in the first two works contains St. Bernard and others and in the last, the Virgin who at that point would have been more "earthly" than the angels. In each case, the artist concerned used stunning *cangiante* modelling to represent the drapery in the celestial section. In the earliest instance, Filippino used more traditional red to yellow hue change with blue to white, whereas in the later works the *cangianti* are not only more subtle but also more sophisticated in that there are less overt hue changes, more akin to Shearman's shifts and vibrations in hue.[20] Fra Bartolommeo's work shows the most use of *cangiante* using paler hues, particularly in the front angel's wings, while the group with Sts. Bernard, Barnabas and Benedict were modelled with solid local hues of white, red, green and black, to be matched in the angels' group only by the Virgin's traditional blue robe. Given Fra Bartolommeo's stylistic connections it seems logical that his colour style -- in his experimention with colour modelling and composition at this "new" point in his career -- should at this point rest between these two artists.

During this period, Albertinelli's colour style more closely matches that which we have been tracing through Ghirlandaio and Michelangelo; Albertinelli and Fra Bartolommeo were not working in partnership, although a business relationship did still continue to function.[21] It is immediately following this period that Pontormo would have been with Albertinelli in the via Gualfonda studio.[22] In both the *Visitation*

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19 Serena Padovani comments on the "*tradizione locale*" surrounding this group of paintings. See: *Andrea del Sarto (1486-1530): Dipinti e disegni a Firenze*, (ex. cat.) (Florence: Centro Di, 1986), 94, cat. no. IV.

20 Shearman, *Development*, 188-9; Shearman cites the Albertinelli Volterra *Annunciation* as a possible precursor.

21 See Fischer *Draughtsman*, 28 which lists various business dealings between the two while Fra Bartolommeo was in Prato: for example, the 20 October 1500 rental of the Frate's Florence house (published in Borgo, "Works," 482-484 (Doc. 3); from A.S.F. [Notarile ante-cosmiano, C 554 (Ser Filippo Cioni, atti del 1499-1503)], c. 51 r); the lease of Fra Bartolommeo's brother Piero's house to Albertinelli on 26 July 1501; Fra Bartolommeo giving power of attorney to Albertinelli on 12 December 1501 (published in Borgo, "Works," 502-3 (Doc. 7) from A.S.F., [Notarile ante-cosmiano V 356 (Ser Lorenzo Violi, atti del 1500-1503)], cc. 24v-25r.); and after a long gap, on 1 January 1505 Piero enters Albertinelli's workshop (published in Borgo, "Works," 511-516 as 1 January 1506 (Doc. 10) from Florence: Biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana, [San Marco 920, Miscellanea No. 2], insert 8). It seems then that the two remained in contact although they were not working together in the same studio.

22 Borgo, *Works*, 14-15 where Borgo suggests that Pontormo must have been in the *bottega* from c. 1506-10; see also James Beck, "The Young Pontormo and Albertinelli," *Burlington Magazine* 122 (1980): 623-4 which unfortunately only says that Pontormo could not have been apprenticed to Albertinelli when it is traditionally thought. Vasari does not discuss

altarpiece (1503; Florence: Uffizi) (Fig. 35) and the *Crucifixion* fresco (inscr. 1506; Galluzzo: Certosa di Val d'Ema) (Fig. 36) Albertinelli used the fully saturated hues and hue change modelling we have come to expect from the lineage of artists examined thus far.[23] Albertinelli uses much stronger, brighter and purer hues in the Certosa fresco than either artist used in the *Last Judgement*, and modelled many of the robes using *cangianti* such as the red to blue in St. John the Evangelist, and the green to yellow in the dramatic clothing of St. Mary Magdalene. Here too, in the female saint's figure, Albertinelli juxtaposed pure local hues one against another (red, green and blue) in much the same way as we have seen Ghirlandaio and Michelangelo do. In the angels, the *cangianti* become even more dramatic, with green to yellow, red through pink to yellow, blue to pink and red to yellow appearing all in one figure. Surely this relates to some extent to the mixed draperies in the *St. Bernard* altarpiece, although the saturation level is quite different. In the *Visitation*, though the *cangianti* are much more subtle in that the yellow highlights of Elizabeth's green tunic barely shine through and her red to yellow drape loses much of its saturation in the shadows, the blocks of local hue remain completely unbroken and much purer and brighter than in any altarpiece we have seen of the Frate's up to this point. The one painting in which Fra Bartolommeo reached a similar level of saturation is the *Christ and the Pilgrims on the Road to Emmaus* (c. 1506-7; Florence: San Marco) (Fig. 37).[24] Here, he created the drapery of the pilgrim at the right using standard red to yellow *cangiante*, although this was accompanied by pale pinks and browns worn by Christ and pale green worn by the other pilgrim so that the overall effect is one of muted hues. It seems that for Fra Bartolommeo this period was one of experiment with modelling systems, but it is important for our present inquiry that his saturation levels and use of hue change modelling consciously never reached that of his contemporary artists.

Fra Bartolommeo was the only one of the artists treated herein who we know with certainty went to Venice. It is therefore crucial to look at this trip to understand one of the ways in which Venetian colour could have come to Florence. The outcome of this trip can go some way towards helping us to comprehend the continuation of the colour modelling system during this time. Although Vasari does not mention a trip by Fra Bartolommeo to Venice, we know that he did indeed travel there for two to

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the nature of Pontormo's contact with Albertinelli and only mentions that Pontormo was placed with, among others, the elder artist: Vasari/Barocchi, 5:307 and Vasari/Bull, 2:236.

23 A number of drawings for the *Visitation* by Fra Bartolommeo survive which is particularly remarkable since the painting was done during his abstention from painting. See Borgo "Works," 277-282.

24 The painting originally hung over the door to the *foresteria* or guest house of the monastery; on the current location, see above, n. 3.

three months in the spring of 1508.[25] He went for a sojourn at the convent of San Pietro Martire on Murano and as a result of his stay the monks commissioned him in April 1508 to paint an altarpiece representing God the Father, St. Mary Magdalene and St. Catherine of Siena.[26] As most scholars now acknowledge, this trip had a profound influence on Fra Bartolommeo's work particularly the resultant exposure to Giovanni Bellini's large scale, apsidal *Sacra Conversazione* compositions; the effect of this visit on Fra Bartolommeo's colour style will of course be a theme in the following paragraphs; additionally, during this period Fra Bartolommeo's in his painting style came close to Perugino.[27] Upon his return from Venice, Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael had all left Florence, meaning that, as Andrea del Sarto had not yet begun working, Fra Bartolommeo would have been the most eminent artist in Florence. Also after this break Fra Bartolommeo renewed his partnership with Albertinelli in November 1508 and strengthened his subsequent connections with the second Florentine Republic, so that during this period he produced perhaps his most powerful masterpieces.

With the probable assistance of Albertinelli Fra Bartolommeo painted *God the Father with Sts. Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Siena* (c. 1508-1513; Lucca: Pinacoteca di Villa Guinigi; inscr. "ORATE P. PICTORE 1509" on the ledge behind the Magdalene) (Fig. 38) in Florence beginning around the time of his return from Venice in June, 1508; it was finished before 1513.[28] As in the *Last Judgement*, Fra Bartolommeo modelled the figures in the *God the Father with Sts. Mary Magdalene*

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25 See Marchese, 2:601-6 who first discussed the trip and which contains the documentary evidence for the Frate's journey involving not only payments but the dispute between the commissioning order on the one hand and Fra Bartolommeo, Albertinelli and San Marco on the other; for a more detailed discussion of the trip and its implications, see Peter Humfrey, "Fra Bartolommeo, Venice and St. Catherine of Siena," *Burlington Magazine* 132 (1990), 476-483; Chris Fischer, ed., *Disegni di Fra Bartolomeo e della sua scuola*, ex. cat. (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1986): 84-5 and Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 157-9. These references also give a more detailed discussion of the dispute over the payments and transfer for the work from Florence to Murano, which is not particularly relevant for the present discussion.

26 The contract does not survive, but it is known from an entry in the account book at San Marco that it was commissioned at this date: see Borgo "Works," 376-80 and 523-25 (Doc. 14) who publishes the document in A.S.F. 103:55, [Libro di Debitori e Creditori del Convento di San Marco Segnato C], c. 84; the hues/pigments *rosso* and *azuro* [sic] are listed in this document. There is a long debate as to whether or not Albertinelli participated in this work: for a summary, see Borgo "Works," 380-1.

27 On the influence of Perugino on Fra Bartolommeo, see Fischer, *Draughsman*, 235 and 265. This is an area which deserves further attention in another context.

28 The Frate presented the work to his friend Sante Pagnini who had just become prior at San Romano, a Dominican convent in Lucca; it was transferred to its current location at the Pinacoteca di Villa Guinigi in Lucca in 1874. Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 157. On Albertinelli's participation, see Borgo "Works," 377 and 380 and on the transfer to Lucca, 378 and n. 9 which cites P. Campetti, *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Comunale di Lucca* (Lucca: 1909), 47-48 For payments, see Borgo "Works," 523-525, (Doc. 14) from A.S.F. 103:55, [Libro di Debitori e Creditori del Convento di San Marco Segnato C], c.84. For further discussion on the debate between San Pietro Martire and San Marco, see Humfrey, 177.

and Catherine of Siena using an Albertian system of tonal modelling, which is particularly evident in the red sleeve of the Magdalene where the highlights appear as white while the shadows behind her elbow were made with dark brown or black mixed in. All of the relief directly relates to the light in the work which falls from the right and Fra Bartolommeo used this light and the resultant modelling to unify the work tonally. In terms of the colour composition, the Frate used unique blocks of local hue to simplify the work, but the whole is tied by this unity; this allowed him to deal with the various requirements of each figure's drapery: the Magdalene wears rich, gold-trimmed green drape and the usual red tunic while St. Catherine is dressed in the white and black of her own Dominican order. God the Father wears a solid, simple red robe which balances the two lower halves of the work. Despite its simplicity, Fra Bartolommeo masterfully used colour to join together and individually establish the various elements of the painting.

The works he saw in Venice had an effect on the Frate, although apparently only in certain ways. For example, Fra Bartolommeo did not betray the interest in surface and detail which we might expect from an exposure to artists such as Bellini. But as Chris Fischer points out, Fra Bartolommeo was profoundly affected by Bellini's *Sacra Conversazione* compositions such as the *San Zaccaria Altarpiece* although this influence was revealed not as early as the Murano work, but in the series of altarpieces done later in Florence.[29] Of Bellini's relevant paintings, two commissioned for the same church but which at the time of Fra Bartolommeo's visit hung in the nearby nun's church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, would have been readily accessible to Fra Bartolommeo; first, the *Votive Picture of Doge Agostino Barbarigo (Sacra Conversazione)* (inscr. 1488; Murano: San Pietro Martire) (Fig. 39), and second, the *Assumption of the Virgin* (c. 1510; Murano; San Pietro Martire) (Fig. 40).[30] In the former, fully saturated colours, a fairly narrow range of tonality for modelling, attention to the way fabrics react to light, and use of white to establish foreground figures characterise Bellini's colour. The foundation elements of the colour composition -- that is simple blocks of the main palette colours, unrepeated -- become greater in relation to the whole, and characterises one of the Venetian influences on Fra Bartolommeo.[31]

One of the main effects of Fra Bartolommeo's trip to Venice on his colour style was an increase in the chromatic level and a decrease in *chiaroscuro*; this was

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29 Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 157.

30 Humfrey, 477-80.

31 See Shearman, "Developments," 121. Of importance to Fra Bartolommeo's palette choice and colour compositions was the series of Madonna and Child panels by Bellini, characterised by the *Madonna of the Pear* (c. 1480; Bergamo: Galleria dell'Accademia Carrara) (Fig. 41), the *Madonna of the Pomegranate* (c. 1485-90; London: National Gallery) and the *Madonna and Child* (inscribed 1488; Glasgow: Glasgow Art Gallery & Museum).

achieved especially through the way in which Venetian light reveals itself through colour and in which Leonardesque chiaroscuro lighting systems tend to "consume" colour.[32] It is particularly important that at this time Bellini's colour -- that is his palette choices and colour compositions -- affected the Frate, while Bellini's clear and focused atmospheres and quality of modelling did not. It also seems that Fra Bartolommeo took a new look at including landscapes in the background of his paintings, particularly in the *God the Father with Saints Catherine and Mary Magdalene* and in the view glimpsed in the back of the the *Carondelet Madonna* (1512; Stuttgart: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen; originally for the Cathedral of St. Stephen in Besançon) (Fig. 47).[33] This is not to say that Florentine artists did not use this device, but the introduction of it in conjunction with exposure to Bellini's paintings seems more than a coincidence. In Fra Bartolommeo works which include landscapes, he set fully saturated foreground hues against a more muted, blended vista background that includes many of the same hues from the figures; however, he mixed the background colours together in a way which gives that area prominence, and yet does not make it compete with the main focus of attention.

What we have as a result of Fra Bartolommeo's trip to Venice is the inverse of what we might normally expect; that is, he took over Venetian compositional design and fused it with Florentine colour. This alters the usual distinctions of Florentine *disegno* and Venetian *colore* which have recently been challenged by scholars.[34] It also maintains the balance of interest and innovation in the Frate's career which will become apparent by the end of the chapter: that while his compositional changes were fundamental to the development of Florentine painting during this period, his colour was less innovatory than many of his contemporaries.

Once he returned from Venice in 1508, as mentioned above, and following the departure of Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael, Fra Bartolommeo and Albertinelli but in particular the Frate, held great prominence in Florence. From this point, his career ascended and he was commissioned to do a series of large-scale altarpieces in and around Florence. In these works we see not only the effect of Bellini's

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32 Sydney J. Freedberg, *Painting in Italy 1500-1600*, 2d. ed. (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1983), 196.

33 See Ludovico Borgo, "The Problem of the Ferry Carondelet Altar-piece," *Burlington Magazine* 133 (1971): 362-371.

34 As a beginning to the responses to this complicated question, see: S[ydney] J. Freedberg, "*Disegno* versus *Colore* in Florentine and Venetian Painting of the Cinquecento," in *Florence and Venice, comparisons & relations: Acts of Two Conferences at Villa I Tatti, 1976-77*, 2 vols. (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1979), 309-22 which deals with the more traditional association of Florence with *disegno* and Venice with *colore* and Maurice George Poirier, "Studies on the Concepts of Disegno, Invenzione and Colore in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Italian Art and Theory" (Ph.D diss., New York University, 1976), which questions the traditional associations.

compositional influence but also Fra Bartolommeo's interest in establishing a monumental Florentine style in the line of that being created in Rome by Michelangelo and Raphael. These altarpieces will be looked at in the following paragraphs as much as a group of single entities so that we can determine what Fra Bartolommeo's overall colour style was during this period of intense creativity and multiple commissions. Although their partnership lasted during these years, Albertinelli's involvement in the pictures at hand was small. The paintings from this intense period of activity include: and the

In the Lucca *Madonna and Child with Sts. John the Baptist and Stephen* (inscr. 1509; Lucca: Cathedral), which would have been one of the first done after his return from Venice and the *God the Father*, Fra Bartolommeo created a work not nearly as tonally unified as that produced for Murano.[35] There are many more jumps from bright to dark areas and the difference in tone between St. John the Baptist's brown garment and St. Stephen's red and white produces more of an imbalance here than the unity which the similar colour varieties produced in the Murano panel. Fra Bartolommeo set dark areas of his figures, particularly the Virgin, against the lit background creating the same light-dark juxtaposition seen in earlier discussions of Ghirlandaio and Michelangelo paintings; additionally, on the St. Stephen figure he uses the same fan-type drapery folds lying along the ground as observed in the work of these first two artists.[36] It may be that in a work executed rather quickly, Fra Bartolommeo turned to techniques he had learned in his early exposure to Ghirlandaio's studio.

Although Fra Bartolommeo's altarpiece for the governing body of Florence remains incomplete, it is worthwhile to examine it for a variety of reasons. First, in its present state it gives us a great deal of information about the Frate's working methods. Second, because of this information, we can speculate, not about what his exact hue choices would have been, but at least about his overall palette. The history of the *Pala del Gran Consiglio* (1510-13; Florence: Museo di San Marco; originally for the Sala del Gran Consiglio in the Palazzo Vecchio) (Fig. 43) was tied as much to the history of Florentine government in the first decades of the sixteenth century, as to art history; and the Frate's involvement in the commission is indicative of his fortunes being bound to his connections with San Marco and the Republic. On 18 May 1498 the Grand Council of the second Republic of Florence commissioned the

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35 The altarpiece was commissioned by Alessandro Diodati, operaio of the Lucca Cathedral; for payments see Borgo "Works," 526-7 (Doc. 15) from A.S.F. 103:55 [Libro di Debitori e Creditori del Convento di San Marco Segnato] C, c. 96. No pigments are referred to. Although Albertinelli received many of the payments and apparently did much of the business related to this work, it is doubtful that he participated in its creation: see Borgo "Works," 384-5.

36 For the drawings, see Fischer, *Disegni*, cat. nos. 37 - 40 (no. 38 is the figure study for St. Stephen).

altarpiece for their new Hall from Filippino Lippi; the artist died six years later in April 1504 after only having completed the frame.[37] Six years later, on 25 November 1510, Fra Bartolommeo received the commission in what Wilde believes was a step towards re-establishing the position of San Marco after the death of Savonarola; the reasons for the six year delay are unknown.[38] As Fischer notes, under the terms of the contract Fra Bartolommeo was to follow the designs as stipulated in Filippino's contract; unfortunately neither Fra Bartolommeo's contract nor his designs have been found. By January 1513 Fra Bartolommeo's work had only reached the underpainting stage. However at that stage the Republic had fallen (September 1512), the Medici returned to government and the Consiglio abolished so that the altarpiece was never finished.[39] Given those facts we must lament the loss of a comparison of the two artists' colour styles for this most important of commissions.

Despite the unfinished condition of the work, much can still be said about Fra Bartolommeo's colour style as the *Pala del Gran Consiglio* is quite informative about his working processes. We know from this work and from the excellent conservation being done at the moment on the *Pala Pitti* that in this period Fra Bartolommeo frequently began with tonal underpainting and then added thin layers of pigment over that to give hue to the relief.[40] Firstly, this use of underpainting allows us to understand how he was able to unify tonally his works, in a way quite different from the way in which we will see Andrea del Sarto reach the same ends. Secondly, it betrays his continuing debt to Leonardo who uses this type of underpainting , for example, in his unfinished *Adoration of the Magi* (1481; Florence, Galleria degli

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37 Filippino had done the altarpiece for the Sala del Gran Consiglio, the *Madonna degli Otto*, now in the Uffizi (inscr. 1485). The document is published in *Studien zu Michelangelo und zur Kunst Seiner Zeit*, III, c: "Die Sala del Consiglio Grande im Palazzo della Signoria zu Florenz"; in *Jahrb. d. Kgl. Preuss. Kunstsign.*, 30, 1909, Beiheft, 113ff; see Johannes Wilde, "The Hall of the Great Council of Florence," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 7 (1944): 76-7; the document is in A.S.F. Protocollo delle Deliberazione de'Signori e Collegi dal 1508 al 1511. Bimestre dei Nov. e Dec. 1510. On this altarpiece, see also: U. Baldini & R. Monticolo, "La Pala della Signoria di Fra Bartolommeo," *Critica d'Arte* 53 (1988): 22-30.

38 See Wilde, 77; Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 219-220; the documents are published in Marchese, 2:603.

39 In 1513 when the partnership with Albertinelli was dissolved the painting stayed with the Frate at San Marco; in 1517 it went to San Lorenzo and from there to the collection of Grand Prince Ferdinando de Medici in whose collection it was described in 1723. In 1774 it went to the Uffizi and from there in 1924 to the Museo San Marco; see Serena Padovani, "Profilo biografico e itinerario Fiorentino," in Marco Ciatti & Serena Padovani, eds., *Fra Bartolomeo: la Pietà di Pitti restaurata*, (ex. cat.). (Florence: Centro Di, 1988), 90.

40 My thanks to Dott. Marco Ciatti and his staff for allowing me to see the *Pala Pitti*, under restoration during the summer of 1994, and for their helpful information on Fra Bartolommeo's technique. Vasari tells us that Fra Bartolommeo used lampblack [*stampatori*] and burnt ivory [*nero di avorio*] among others as underpainting for the *Pala Pitti*, and it seems reasonable that his studio would have used similar pigments for the *Pala del Gran Consiglio*; see Vasari/Barocchi, 4:95; Vasari/Bull, 2:122.

Uffizi) (Fig. 44).[41] Leonardo is typically reticent in his writings about technical matters, but we can see through a comparison of the two works that the Frate worked in a more systematic way as all levels of relief and composition in the Gran Consiglio altarpiece are the same. Although the painting only reached this level of development, it is still harmonious and legible.

We are made aware that the light in the *Pala del Gran Consiglio* should have fallen from the left not only by the cast shadows, but also by the greater light level on the right of the painting and by the apparent change in pigment used to create shadow: from brown/black on the left to reddish brown on the right. The effect of this on the pigments painted over these layers would presumably be to give a warm glow to the more strongly lit areas. Presumably Fra Bartolommeo would have arranged his colours to stress these divisions as he did in the *Pala Pitti*, in which St. Bartholomew at the right standing in the light wears a red to yellow tunic and light grey drape; by contrast St. George at the left with his back to the light is clad in dark grey, almost black armour with a dark red wrap. A similar technique was used in the *Pala Pitti* to the point that the layers of pigment which give local hue to the angels surrounding the baldachin are almost tissue-thin, and in many areas there would be no relief save for that given by the monochrome layer. These are all techniques which can be achieved because of the veiling capabilities of oil paint, and are in stark contrast to the sorts of pure saturated hues and blocky modelling necessitated by fresco and tempera work. Fra Bartolommeo showed himself as conversant with an innovatory colour technique by using these sorts of systems, which were quite different from what had been done in Florence at the end of the fifteenth century, and again dependent upon technical differences such as the introduction of oil binders.

The *Pala del Gran Consiglio* would have been on the altar of the main *Sala* of the government, and as such logically could have had a great effect on colour style in early sixteenth-century Florence. It also would had to have a decorum of colour suitable not only to the subject matter but also to the location. Though we do not know what the overall palette would have been, as discussed above it is possible that it would have been similar to the *Pala Pitti*; however, it more likely would have had that type of palette than a more saturated one such as the Louvre *Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine* (1511; Paris: Louvre; originally for San Marco) (Fig. 44). this would have given a sober, restrained and balanced sense of colour to the hall. It is likely that Michelangelo's and Leonardo's frescoes would have matched this scheme, particularly because of the restraints put on any bright hues by the respective subjects, nudes and

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41 Leonardo used *terraverde*, brown bitumen and white lead in order to create his relief; see Martin Kemp, *Leonardo da Vinci: The Marvellous Works of Nature and Man* (London: Dent, 1981), 78.

horses making an ensemble visibly representative of the power of the new government.

The *Pitti Pietà* (c. 1511/12-14; Florence: Palazzo Pitti, Galleria Palatina) (Fig. 48) offers a particular point of interest in its connection with the Deposition/Pietà subject, and it is one of the instances where Fra Bartolommeo uses the type of modelling which we are examining.[42] The date of the painting has come under discussion after the cleaning, with Fischer suggesting a new dating of 1511-12.[43] Fischer's new date places the work before the trip to Rome, but after the trip to Venice.[44] Vasari gives us very little information about Fra Bartolommeo's *Pitti Pietà*, saying only, "In San Gallo he began a panel picture which was later finished by Giuliano Bugiardini, and is today on the high altar of San Jacopo tra'Fossi, on the Canto degli Alberti;" additionally, the involvement of Bugiardini in the *Pitti Pietà* has recently come under question.[45] Fortunately, thanks to Chris Fischer's recent documentary research, we have a much better idea about the circumstances surrounding Fra Bartolommeo's commission for and creation of this altarpiece; namely, that it was created for the *Arte della Seta* and hung on the main altar in San Gallo.[46]

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42 For more detailed information, see Ciatti & Padovani, *passim*; and in particular the essays by Chris Fischer: "La Pietà di Fra Bartolomeo," trans. Serena Padovani, in Ciatti & Padovani, 13-14 and the restoration information, 53-82 and Ludovico Borgo, "Fra Bartolommeo, Albertinelli and a "*Pietà*" for the Certosa of Pavia," *Burlington Magazine* 108 (1966): 463-8.

43 See Fischer, "Pietà," 19; briefly, he bases his dating on the similarities between this painting, and the one described by Vasari which Bugiardini finished. As these observations are based on the cleaned painting, I am inclined to accept these over Freedberg's later 1516 dating; see Freedberg, *Renaissance*, 20 or Borgo, "Pavia" and "Works," which suggest the work was done around 1511-13 but for the Certosa di Pavia. See Fischer, "Pietà," 17 and notes in which Fischer disagrees with Borgo's attribution.

44 On the trip to Venice, see Humfrey, "Venice": 476-83. Fischer convincingly argues against Bugiardini's completion of the altarpiece, suggesting that there were two altarpieces of the same subject in progress at the same time; see Fischer, "Pietà," 17-19. The altarpiece, as Vasari tells us, originally hung in San Gallo just outside the San Gallo gate to the north of the city; the painting most likely stayed there until 1531 when the monks were moved to San Jacopo tra'Fossi, as a result of the destruction of San Gallo, in connection with the siege of Florence and subsequent fall of the Florentine republic. On San Gallo and the transfer of these Augustinian monks after the siege, see A[lessandro] Cecchi, "Profili di amici e committenti," in *Andrea*, 43 ff. Construction of the church, commissioned by Lorenzo il Magnifico and designed by Giuliano da Sangallo, began in 1488/9 with a pause in 1492, finally finished in 1505.

45 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:102; Vasari/Bull, 2:127: "*Cominciò in San Gallo una tavola, la quale fu poi finita da Giuliano Bugiardini, oggi allo altar maggiore di San Iacopo fra'* [*sic*] *Fossi, al Canto agli Alberti...*"

46 Fischer, "Pietà," 13-33; the specific commission documents did not survive; in 1505 the Arte della Seta paid for the completion of the main chapel of San Gallo. In 1532 the Pope authorised that the patronage of the San Gallo chapels would be transferred to San Jacopo tra'Fossi; on transfer to San Jacopo tra' Fossi Fra Bartolommeo's work hung in the main chapel. It possilby follows that the Frate's work would have been originally meant for that same place; for the discussion of chapel transfer, see: David Franklin, *Rosso in Italy: the Italian Career of Rosso Fiorentino* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1994), 94ff. On the hypothesis regarding the original location, see Fischer, "Pietà," 14. The panel may have suffered some of

Fra Bartolommeo's colour style in this work more closely matches a late *quattrocento* work than some of his other contemporary paintings. This may in part be due to the technique. Bracci found that in this instance Fra Bartolommeo painted by a superimposition of thin layers of rich oil or oil tempera colours over transparent ones.[47] This differs from the use of thin veils of colour over a monochrome relief scheme. For example, the green tunic of St. Paul contained first white and yellow pigments, possibly from the priming, then green (verdigris) and a little lead white, and finally verdigris mixed with varnish. The red mantle of St. John the Evangelist began with a brown/beige pigment made with various ochres, a red layer of vermilion and lake, a thin layer of vermilion and red lead and a repetition of the vermilion/lake layers and finally varnish.[48] This all resulted in a painting with a more opaque but also richer sense of pigment and hue than the other type of work he had done, such as the *Pala Pitti.*

It is helpful at this point to examine briefly the rapport between Fra Bartolommeo and Raphael.[49] After discussing the *Vision of St. Bernard* and other works, Vasari describes that:

> At that time the painter Raphael of Urbino came to study his art in Florence, and he taught the best principles of perspective to Fra Bartolommeo; and wanting to colour in the same style as the friar, and being pleased by his handling of colours and way of harmonizing them, he was always in his company. It was at that time that Fra Bartolommeo painted in San Marco in Florence a panel picture with an infinite number of figures, which is now in the possession of the King of France, to whom it was given after being on show for many months in San Marco.[50]

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the damage at San Jacopo tra'Fossi as while there (1505-1619) it survived various floods and subsequent restorations. Cardinal Carlo de'Medici, brother of Duke Ferdinand II, acquired the painting from the church on 22 May, 1619; Fischer suggests that it was for him that the top third of the painting was sawn off to alter the paintings function from that of a large altarpiece to a personal devotional painting; the painting is listed as a *Pietà* by Fra Bartolommeo "*con la Madonna S.Gio.e Sa. Maria Madalena...*" in an inventory of the Cardinal's residence made upon his death in 1666; on 30 June, 1667 the painting entered the Granducal collection and has remained in the Palazzo Pitti to the present day; Fischer, "Pietà," 14-15.

47 Nicoletta Bracci, "Tecnica di esecuzione e stato di conservazione," in Ciatti & Padovani, 69-70.

48 Mauro Matteini & Arcangelo Moles, "Analisi chimiche e stratigrafiche e stdio di una procedura selettiva per la rimozione della ridipintura," in Ciatti & Padovani, 66.

49 See Ludovico Borgo, "Fra Bartolommeo e Raffaello: l'incontro romano del 1513," abstract of conference paper given at the *Congresso Internazionale di Studi su Raffaello held in Urbino and Florence 6-14 April 1984* (Florence, 1984); Giuseppe Fiocco, "Fra Bartolommeo e Raffaello," *Rivista d'Arte* 29 (1954): 43-53; Serena Padovani, "Considerazioni sulla fortuna della 'Madonna del Baldacchino' e un'ipotesi," in Marco Chiarini, Marco Ciatti & Serena Padovani, *Raffaello a Pitti: La Madonna del Baldacchino storia e restuaro*, (ex. cat.) (Florence: Centro Di, 1991); Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 107.

50 See Vasari/Barocchi, 4:94-5; Vasari/Bull, 2:121: "*Venne in questo tempo Raffaello da Urbino pittore a imparare l'arte a Fiorenza, et isegnò i termini buoni della prospettiva a fra' Bartolomeo; perchè essendo Raffaello volonteroso di colorire nella maniera del frate, e piacendogli il maneggiare i colori e lo unir suo, con lui di continuo si stava. Fece in quel tempo una*

It is somewhat odd that Vasari should attribute the contact between the two as having happened in this period, as the Louvre *Sacra Conversazione* is inscribed 1511 at which point Raphael had been in Rome for three years; the most immediate explanation would be that Vasari meant the 1509 *San Marco Madonna* rather than the 1511 *Sacra Conversazione* sent to France. This would make perfect sense of Serena Padovani's discussion of the reciprocal debt owed between Fra Bartolommeo and Raphael with regards the Madonna *in baldacchino* compositions, beginning with Raphael's *Pala Dei* in 1507-8 and including the Louvre *Sacra Conversazione* and the *Pala Pitti*.[51]

By comparing both the colour style and technique in Raphael's *Madonna del Baldacchino* (1507-8; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti) (Fig. 49) with Fra Bartolommeo's *Pala Pitti* (1512; Florence: Galleria dell'Accademia; originally done for San Marco to replace the Louvre *Mystic Marriage*) (Fig. 46), we can understand more about how the exchange between the two in terms of colour might have worked. Though we do not yet have a technical report on the *Pala Pitti*, an examination of its appearance makes it seem fairly certain that it would have been painted in a similar technique to the *Madonna del Baldacchino*. We do have excellent reports on the *Madonna del Baldacchino* and from these it appears that Raphael laid down the colour in a similar way to the *Pala Pitti*, with thin layers of pigment over a monochrome underpainting.[52] This type of technique, and the fact that it produces paintings which are tonally unified and not necessarily chromatically strong -- that is with fully saturated hues -- sets these two artists in this period somewhat apart from the line which we are following. The opportunity to asses the further contact between Raphael and Fra Bartolommeo will arise again when Fra Bartolommeo goes to Rome. Chris Fishcer also connects this work with Perugino's style -- in particular his Pitti *Lamentation* -- and the rounded drapery folds and use of saturated colour.[53] The Frate could well have seen Perugino's similar colour style in the nearby Annunziata in the *Deposition* which the older artist completed in 1507.

As is seen through the discussion of the *Pala del Gran Consiglio* and the *Pala Pitti*, the rest of the paintings from this period bear great similarities to these first two, in fact even more so now that the latter is being cleaned. The differences are small enough so that a systematic discussion would seem somewhat repetitive; a few

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tavola con infinità di figure in San Marco in Fiorenza: oggi è appresso al re di Francia, che fu a lui donata, et in San Marco molti mesi si tenne a mostra."

51 See Padovani in Chiarini, Ciatti & Padovani, 23-4.

52 See Marco Ciatti & Adria Tortorelli, "Il dipinto: tecnica pittorica e restauro," in Chiarini, Ciatti & Padovani, 79-82.

53 On the rapport with Perugino, see Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 265 where he raises the admiration of one of Fra Bartolommeo's great patrons, Pier del Pugliese for Perugino.

general comments serve to emphasise particular areas of importance from this period in the Frate's career. He did use *cangianti* and fully saturated hues when the lighting demanded, as in the St. Bartholomew from the *Pala Pitti*, but never do any of his paintings reach an overall chromatic level equal to that of Michelangelo or Ghirlandaio; this is as much bound to technique as to any other considerations. The Louvre *Sacra Conversazione with the Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine* (Fig. 45) remains as the one exception to this generalisation. In that painting Fra Bartolommeo used fairly fully saturated hues in the foreground saints, and of particular note used red to yellow *cangiante* in Sts. Catherine and Peter at the extreme right and left; however, in St. Peter's robe, the red becomes quite tonally dark in the shadow so that Fra Bartolommeo almost mixed hue change and tonal modelling, or rather adjusted hue change modelling according to the light requirements. These may be used in part because of the lighting -- by being in the foreground both figures catch the strong light which does not reach into the apse -- and also because of the need to balance St. Catherine of Siena's bright white habit in the foreground. He used colour in a much more overt way to emphasise lighting and the spatial structure of the composition, more so than in later paintings, particularly the *Pala Pitti* painted to replace this brighter, more fully saturated work. In paintings like the *Carondelet Madonna* and the *Pala Pitti*, the palette choice and colour composition were much more firmly geared towards a unity, based in the former on flesh tones of Sts. John the Baptist and Sebastian and the white robes of St. Bernard and in the latter on this hue obtained by veils of oil over monochrome underpainting. In this period Fra Bartolommeo used colour in a variety of ways to suit his ends, and seemed to have experimented with various techniques, combining them to either let the saturated hues come forward or later, to allow the unifying role of the underpainting take over.

In September 1512, the Second Republic of Florence was forced to give up control of the city to the Medici; this had profound effects on the course of art in the early decades of the sixteenth century, and on Fra Bartolommeo's career in particular. As an artist so closely connected with the Second Republic, and one who had not made strong connections in other cities such as Rome or Milan, the demise of his foremost patron(s) and political connections meant that the Frate was left looking for work. It is also important that at this point the artistic focus of Florence moved to Santissima Annunziata and Andrea's workshop.[54] By 5 January 1513 Fra Bartolommeo's partnership with Albertinelli had been dissolved as well so that source

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54 Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 292; he makes a comment that Rosso was almost certainly associated with Fra Bartolommeo in the last years of the Republic, but gives no reference for the information.

of stability was gone.[55] The course of his work during this period indicates a certain instability in terms of commissions and patrons.

Vasari writes that:

> Hearing word of the noble works being made in Rome by Michelangelo, and also those of the gracious Raphael, and compelled by the fame which continual reached his ears of the marvels wrought by those inspired craftsmen, with the prior's permission he moved to Rome; and there he was looked after by Fra Mariano Fetti, friar of the Piombo, for whom at his own convent of San Silvestro at Montecavallo, he painted two pictures of St. Peter and St. Paul. But he did not succeed in working as well in the climate of Rome as he had in that of Florence, and moreover, between the ancient and modern works that he saw, in such great abundance, he grew so bewildered that he lost much of the ability and excellence he thought he possessed; and so he resolved to quit, and he left Raphael of Urbino to finish one of his unfinished pictures, namely St. Peter. This was retouched all over by the hand of the splendid Raphael and given to Fra Mariano. And Fra Bartolommeo thus returned to Florence where it had often in the past been alleged that he did not know how to paint nudes.[56]

Approximately six months after the workshop broke up, Fra Bartolommeo indeed travelled to Rome; it is likely that he went in either autumn 1513 or spring 1514 due to the fact that there is no evidence for his having been in Florence during this period. It is the only documented trip we have of any of these artists to Rome, and the comparison with the effects of the Venice trip makes for an enlightening contrast. Vasari's account raises a number of points which are not only important regarding Fra Bartolommeo but also the question of there being a Florentine colour style definable as opposed to Roman or Venetian. Vasari was at great pains to indicate not only that Fra Bartolommeo came for the commissions but also that he left because he could not work so well outside Florence and, as Fischer also adds, was not physically well;[57] Vasari makes a similar case regarding Andrea del Sarto's departure from France where he only stayed for a year, nor did Pontormo seem to stray much outside of Tuscany. While it is certainly not possible to analyse the psychology of why they

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55 For the document regarding this dissolution, see Florence: Biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana, [San Marco 920, Miscellanea No. 2], insert 8 published in Borgo, "Works," 548-551 and Marchese, Doc. IV, 417-420.

56 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:96-7; Vasari/Bull, 2:123: "*Sentendo egli nominare l'opre egregie di Michele Angelo fatte a Roma, così quelle del grazioso Raffaello, esforzato dal grido che di continuo udiva de le maraviglie fatte dai due divini artefici, con licenza del priore si trasferì a Roma; dove trattenuto da fra' Mariano Fetti frate del Piombo a Montecavallo e San Silvestro, luogo suo, gli dipinse due quadri di San Pietro e San Paolo. E perché non gli riuscì molto il far bene in quella aria come aveva fatto nella fiorentina -- attesoché fra le antiche e moderne opere che vidi, e in tanta copia, stordì di maniera che grandemente scemò la virtù e la eccellenza che gli pareva avere --, deliberò di partirsi, e lasciò a Raffaello da Urbino che finisse uno de' quadri il quale non era finito che fu il San Piero; il quale, tutto ritocco di mano del mirabile Raffaello, fu dato a fra' Mariano. E così se ne tornò a Fiorenza, dove era stato morso più volte che non sapeva fare gli ignudi.*"

57 Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 292 based on Crowe and Cavalcaselle's hypothesis.

could not work outside Florence, for our present purposes it is more important to stress these artists' almost constant residence in Florence as it connects all the painters with which we are concerned; it is an issue as much related to Vasari's interest in establishing the artistic supremacy of Florence as to any psychological concerns.

The impact of Roman colour (or rather the colour style in Rome being created by Florentine artists) on Fra Bartolommeo was not as strong as the effect of the monumental figure style. The works created by the Frate in Rome and after include: the *Sts. Peter and Paul* (c. 1513-14; Rome: Museo Vaticano);[58] *St. Mark Evangelist* (1514; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti) (Fig. 50);[59] *Madonna della Misericordia* (inscr. 1515; Lucca: Museo de Villa Guinigi) (Fig. 51); and the now dismantled *Pala Billi* (1516; Florence: *Salvator Mundi*: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti (Fig. 52); *Prophet Job* (Fig. 53) and *Prophet Isaiah*: Accademia (Fig. 54).

In these works we see the great effect of the figural style of Michelangelo in the Sistine and of Raphael not only in the *Stanze*, but also the *Isaiah* in San Agostino (1512; Rome: San Agostino) (Fig. 54). Figures tend to be much more isolated and grand in terms of musculature, pose, movement and general decorum. In the *Sts. Peter* and *Paul*, we see this not only in the way in which they are isolated against a background but also in the strong blocks of colour used to create the figures. Raphael used a much more dramatic colour scheme in finishing the *St. Peter* including a red through orange to yellow hue change drapery, while Fra Bartolommeo draped St. Paul in more Albertian tonally modelled robes. There is a similar case in the *St. Mark Evangelist* (Fig. 50); we would hope to find the hue changes and fully saturated colours to match his interest in the forms of Michelangelo's *Prophets* but Fra Bartolommeo used simple blue and red to create the drapery. Unfortunately, the companion *St. Sebastian* has been lost, but given the traditional nudity of the saint, we should not imagine too many surprises in terms of colour; the basic scheme of the Fiesole copy shows green architecture and hue change wings in the angel moving from red to green to yellow.[60] The *Madonna della Misericordia* (Fig. 51) reveals yet another side of Fra Bartolommeo's colour style but one unrelated to Rome. Despite the darkened varnish it is clear that he offered a very different palette and modelling

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58 On the *Sts. Peter* and *Paul*, see: Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 292; *Raffaello in Vaticano*, ex. cat. (Rome 1984); Fiocco, 44.

59 On the *St. Mark Evangelist* and the lost *St. Sebastian*, see Janet Cox-Rearick, "Fra Bartolommeo's St. Mark the Evangelist and St. Sebastian with Angel," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz* 28 (1974): 329ff; also Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 323; Fischer, "Pietà," 130 and on the transfer of the *St. Mark* and the *Salvator Mundi* from panel to canvas, see G. Incerpi, "I restauri sui quadri fiorentini portati a Parigi," in *Actes du Colloque - Florence et la France "Rapports sous la Révolution et l'Empire"* (Paris: Editart Quatre-Chemins, 1979), 215ff. The *St. Mark*, together with the parts of the *Pala Billi* are currently under restoration in Florence.

60 On the half-size copy in San Francesco, Fiesole, ascribed to Perino del Vaga, see Cox-Rearick, "Sebastian": 332; for discussion of another possible copy in France, now untraceable, see 337ff.

technique than in previous works. Many of the draperies are greyed and the whole palette reads as pale hues and half-tones. However in certain areas he allowed displays of colour to come through, for example the red to pink to yellow colour change sleeve of the mother in the foreground left and the beautiful grey, pink and lilac dress of the woman at the opposite side. Here also, the increased movement and dynamism of works such as the late Stanze clearly have effected the Frate, although the source for his colour style in this particular work must remain obscure. The reverse happens with the exposure of Rosso and Pontormo to Rome, in that they do seem to be effected by, in particular, Michelangelo's colour use there. This difference in influence strenghtens the lineage from Michelangelo through to Rosso and Pontormo, and shows the different path taken by the San Marco school.

The last work that we will examine here, and one of the few done for Florence after the fall of the Republic, is the *Pala Billi* which originally consisted of a *Salvator Mundi and Four Saints* (Fig. 52) flanked by *Job* (Fig. 53) and *Isaiah* (Fig. 54). The ensemble hung in the Billi chapel under the organ loft to the right in Santissima Annunziata and was commissioned by Salvator Billi, a banker who lived outside Florence.[61] Unfortunately the paintings are being cleaned at the moment and were unavailable for viewing and prior to that were difficult to read due to extremely yellowed varnish. The figure style certainly matches up with what we have seen prior to this work, and we can imagine, by comparing the way the colour looks in the standing saints now to the way colour was in the *St. Mark* prior to the restoration, that there would not be a great discrepancy. Again, this implies that the figure style the Frate would have seen in Rome certainly had an influence, but even in this late work it seems doubtful that the strong, fully saturated hues of the Sistine Chapel and the Stanze made much of an impact on Fra Bartolommeo. It will be necessary to wait for later artists for this influence to take its full effect in Florence.

Mariotto Albertinelli and in particular Fra Bartolommeo brought many external influences to Florence and had contact with a variety of patrons and events in the early sixteenth century. The Frate's exposure to these had an effect on many aspects of his art: the trip to Venice and experience with Bellini caused a change in the type of compositions, making the *Sacra Conversazione* in an apse a mainstay of his paintings after this trip; the visit to Rome and examination of works by Michelangelo and Raphael resulted in a great change in the type of figures which Fra Bartolommeo represented, in that they became more monumental and important in terms of the entire composition. However, it seems that these new experiences and works did not

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61 See Fischer, *Draughtsman*, 320-23 which includes a photographic reconstruction of the altarpiece *in situ*.

affect the Frate's colour style as much as might be expected. Through the comparison of works seen on these trips with paintings created on or after the trips, it seems that there were no radical changes in his attitude towards colour.

Other issues seem to have had a greater effect on his colour style. For example, Fra Bartolommeo's contact with the Gran Consiglio and commissions during the contact with the Republic caused him to create what would have likely been, due to the dimming effects of the preparatory modelling, a more sober and restrained palette in connection with the location of the work and the patron. During this period his exploration of new techniques brought about by the use of veils of oil paint also made this type of colour use possible and in fact went hand in hand with the new type of colour he was using. However, he did not simply persist with this new colour but rather during his career experimented with various palettes and colour compositions, creating such varied works as the Louvre *Sacra Conversazione*, the *Madonna dell Misericordia* and the *Pala Billi*. In each of these works the Frate tried out a new system, a new way for using colour to create form and did so with widely varying results. To some extent his intermittent contact with Mariotto Albertinelli must have affected these changes as well; the establishment of various *botteghe* and the opportunity to share experiences would certainly have exposed each artist to the others' interests.

For the overall question though, it is important that Fra Bartolommeo never reached the same level of use of fully saturated colour and strength which Albertinelli occasionally did. This cannot have been based on a lack of interest in technique, as we have already demonstrated Fra Bartolommeo's involvement in new techniques in Florence. It seems more likely given the Frate's patrons and continued restraint in all areas of his work that these pure hues and pigments suited neither his artistic temperment nor that of his patrons. As someone working in Florence during the High Renaissance Fra Bartolommeo maintained the unity and balance of colour in line with the unity and balance of composition so important during this time. This was in direct contrast to the work being done by Ghirlandaio and Michelangelo, yet Fra Bartolommeo together with Andrea del Sarto are credited with embodying the early sixteenth century style in Florence. The differences between these artists and the reasons for the shift back to the earlier colour style will be one of the main pursuits in the following chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANDREA DEL SARTO

It would be difficult to say that colour in the work of Andrea del Sarto is a neglected subject. From Francesco Bocchi thirty years after Sarto's death to John Shearman in the 1960s authors have dealt specifically with his unique and supremely important use of colour.[1] Vasari famously called him the painter "*senza errori*" and wrote: "... although he drew with simplicity, his colours are nonetheless rare and truly inspired."[2] What has perhaps not been done to such a great extent, and what this chapter hopes to deal with at least in part, is Andrea's contribution -- as, to use John Shearman's accolade "*Caposcuola* of the Florentine High Renaissance" -- to the idea of Florentine colour as a specific entity and as an issue with a lineage which extends back from Fra Bartolommeo and Andrea del Sarto and forward through the first generation of Mannerists.[3] While we have examined Fra Bartolommeo as one of the main contributors to Florentine painting during this period, his early death, and more importantly his relative decline in favour immediately following the fall of the Florentine Republic (but certainly not later in the history of Florentine painting) made a case for Andrea's ascendency to the post which Shearman assigns him. Furthermore, Andrea's pupils also had a high profile, Rosso departing to make a name for himself in Rome, Florence and later France, while Pontormo, together with Bronzino to some extent, received many of the most prominent Medici commissions after Andrea's death. Contemporary and present-day historians have acknowledged Andrea's apprentices as artists who have moved on from his training to be the creators of a new style.

Despite the number of writings on Sarto's colour, most notably John Shearman's definitive chapter in his Sarto monograph, we do need to examine it anew in light of recent conservation projects and to try to go beyond the mostly stylistic analyses which have gone before to try to define the causes of and reasons for his own distinctive colour style. Andrea's colour needs to be assessed firstly, so we can

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1 For Bocchi, see: Robert Williams, "A Treatise by Francesco Bocchi in Praise of Andrea del Sarto," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 52 (1989): 111-139.

2 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:342: "... *e se bene disegnò semplicemente, sono nondimeno i colori suoi rari e veramente divini.* Vasari/Bull, 2:129.

3 The quote is one of John Shearman's chapter headings covering the period from 1513-17; see: John Shearman, *Andrea del Sarto*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965); as pages in these volumes are numbered consecutively, volume numbers are not given.

know what his contributions were towards an inherently Florentine use and secondly, so we can know in what ways Rosso and Pontormo departed from this received knowledge -- when they are being derivative and when truly innovative. By looking at the colour style which Andrea produced, the influences on it and those whom he influenced we can have a greater sense of his place in the overall question at hand. No Florentine artist worked harder or more subtly to develop his methods of handling colour, and that idea runs as a theme throughout the chapter. In his conclusion of Sarto's life, Vasari places him foremost among Tuscan artists: " And ... he can serve everywhere as an example to the craftsmen of Tuscany, and claim among their most celebrated and talents the highest praise and the palm of honour."[4] Vasari seems to make a distinction between those who succeeded in Rome and those who failed and, although he takes care to stress Michelangelo's Florentine heritage throughout his life, Michelangelo still rises above others because he succeeded in Rome.[5]

In addition to Vasari, we have the lengthy treatise *Discorso sopra l'eccellenza dell'opere d'Andrea del Sarto, pittore fiorentino* written in 1567 by Francesco Bocchi, himself a Florentine, at the age of 19.[6] Bocchi based his ideas on excellence in painting on Aristotle's *Poetics* by making analogies between painting and the philosopher's components of tragedy: plot, character depiction, thought, diction and song. To these Bocchi made the analogies of *disegno*, *costume*, *rilievo*, *colorito* and *dolcezza et facilità*. For Bocchi *colorito*, linked with diction, has as much to do with our twentieth-century notion of form as with traditional colour. One of his examples regarding the colouring of the St. Sebastian in the *Disputa* who wears around his lower half a blue-grey drape, includes discussion of his hair, skin and drape, giving the saint a sense of "great fervour of religion and of great humility."[7] Colouring has a certain spiritual aspect which goes beyond modelling whereas for Bocchi *rilievo* clearly means the creation of three-dimensionality with *chiaroscuro*. Were these comments written by Andrea we could attribute much more direct meaning to them that we can in the given situation; however, Bocchi's comments, like those of Vasari, do give us a strong sense of contemporary opinion and an indication of the relative importance and nature of colour at the time was well as Sarto's role in defining the nature of colour use during this period.

It is the intention of this chapter, not solely to examine the course of Andrea's artistic and stylistic development but rather to examine how his paintings, and mainly

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4 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:397: "*... onde può agli artefici toscani stare per essempio in ogni luogo, et avere fra i più celebrati ingegni loro lode grandissima et onorata palma.*" Vasari/Bull, 2:168.

5 It is difficult to believe Vasari's reasoning that Michelangelo stayed in Rome because of the climate.

6 Again, see Williams.

7 Williams: 115 and 134: "*... gran fervore di religione et di grande humiltà.*"

his use of colour in them developed and, therefore, influenced the work of his two most famous students. It is beyond the scope of this paper to treat each and every work in his *oeuvre*, and certain categories such as portraits and the large body of *Madonna and Child* panels will be necessarily absent. Attention will be drawn to the large altarpieces and frescoes which allow the scale and narrative level which more clearly demonstrate innovation in colour usage, and away from the smaller, more private works which are perhaps more important as studies in thematic development and private patronage. It is also believed that these more public works will contribute to the idea of Florentine colour style in a way in which smaller private works could not be expected to do. There also exists a self-imposed restriction of only handling works which it has been possible for this author to see first hand, due to the quality and inconsistencies in colour reproduction. Questions of dating and attribution will also not be covered in much detail; all of the works discussed are fairly universally agreed to be autograph, and only major disputes as to dating will be handled. Any pertinent comments regarding condition will generally be discussed in the footnotes. Additionally, various points of contact between the artists dealt with in the thesis, for example, common commissions at SS. Annunziata, for the Borgherini bedroom and Poggio a Caiano, necessitate discussion in some way as a group. The facts of these commissions such as dates, patrons, etc. will be handled in this chapter; however, for clarity's sake the direction and nature of influence in these combined efforts will not be discussed until the later artists' contributions have been analysed in subsequent chapters.

Vasari tells us that Andrea studied for three years with an unidentified Florentine painter called Gian Barile, who in turn placed Sarto with Piero di Cosimo. As mentioned in Chapter Four, the connection of both Fra Bartolommeo and Andrea del Sarto with the Rosselli workshop provides an intriguing link between these two masters of the Florentine High Renaissance.[8] Both Shearman and Freedberg offer an additional suggestion, based on a comment written some few years after Andrea's death by the Anonimo Magliabecchiano, that Sarto was also a "*dicepolo*" of Raffaellino del Garbo; they find no evidence of Piero's style in Sarto's, but do find hints of Raffaellino's style in addition to various circumstantial connections.[9] Vasari's general reliability on factual aspects of Sarto's life make it difficult to completely discount contact with Piero di Cosimo; indeed, more recent authors have correctly

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8 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:343-4; Vasari/Bull, 2:130-1.

9 See Shearman, *Sarto*, 19-21 and Sydney J. Freedberg, *Andrea del Sarto*, 2 vols. (*catalogue raisonné* and *text and illustrations*) (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), *cat. rais.*, 266; for the Anonimo Magliabecchiano reference, see 19 (from: C. Frey, *Il Codice Magliabecchiano* (Berlin: 1892)); the original document is in the Biblioteca Nazionale, Florence: Classe XVII, 17.

identified Piero's eccentricities as having infiltrated Sarto's style at certain points.[10] However, contact with Raffaellino does also seem a plausible stylistic link. Equally relevant for Andrea's early career are Vasari's early comments on his colour use: first, that "... Andrea realized that Nature had made him for that profession [the art of painting]. And so very soon he began to work in colour so well that Gian Barile and all the other craftsmen of the city were filled with wonder."[11] And second, that "Nature, having created him a painter, wrought in him so effectively that, when he handled colours, it was as if he had been doing so for fifty years."[12] In this context it most likely can be taken that handling colours signified the transition by an assistant from drawing to painting, and that Andrea made this change smoothly. Yet it is still important that Vasari chose to make this comment about Andrea who became well known for his skill with colour.

In discussing Andrea's early artistic life, Vasari also tells us that he, as all other young artists in Florence, drew from the Battle cartoons of Michelangelo and Leonardo. These two works provided young painters with a focal point for study, and also for establishing contacts and interchanging ideas. This comment, in addition to telling us that Andrea's early activities place him squarely within Florentine tradition, reminds us of the incredibly rich environment for artists at this time in Florence. Michelangelo was in the city to work on the Medici Chapel in San Lorenzo, Leonardo was travelling between Florence and Milan; on the other hand, Raphael was away in Rome working on the Stanze. In the long term these three major artists were frequently or permanently absent from Florence. Given the mobility of Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael, Fra Bartolommeo and Andrea are the first truly major artists of this period who did remain in Florence. Excluding a hypothetical trip to Rome and one year spent in France at the court of Francis I, Andrea spent his whole career in Florence. In addition to contact with the Battle Cartoons, Sarto's work in the Sala introduced him to Franciabigio -- who trained with Albertinelli --, a colleague, studio partner, and friend for quite a few years to come.[13] Both artists seem to have

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10 Franklin, *Rosso*, 7ff.

11 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:343: "*... Andrea con suo molto piacere, conobbe che la natura per quello esercizio l'aveva creato; onde cominciò in assai picciolo spazio di tempo a far cose con i colori, che Gian Barile e gl'altri artefici della città ne restavano maravigliantì*;" in the later version, Vasari adds that Andrea began to work "in a few months/*in pochi mesi*" rather than just a short time; Vasari/Bull, 2:130.

12 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:343-4: "*E la natura, che l'aveva fatto nascere pittore, operava tanto in lui, che nel maneggiare i colori lo faceva con tanta grazia come se avesse lavorato cinquanta anni*; ... " Vasari/Bull, 2:130.

13 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:344-5; Vasari/Bull, 2:130-131. For Franciabigio's side of the relationship, see: Susan Regan McKillop, *Franciabigio* (Berkeley & London: University of California Press, 1974), 7ff; for more, see Fiorella Sricchia Santoro, "Del Franciabigio, dell'Indaco e di una vecchia questione. 1," *Prospettiva* 70 (1993): 22ff. Interestingly, Raffaellino comes up here as well as a stylistic influence on Franciabigio in the first decade of the 1500s, which would add support to Shearman's theories; see McKillop, 26ff.

had similar influences in Piero, Raffaellino del Garbo, and Raphael, and it is of note that Sarto is the one of the two who makes the important advances in terms of colour.

We know a great deal from Vasari and other sources about Sarto's workshop and his partners, though not about the actual way in which apprentices were trained. He shared the first site in the Piazza del Grano with Franciabigio, where they worked from sometime before 12 December 1508. From there, the two moved to the *Sapienza* near SS. Annunziata around 1511, another reason for Andrea's workshop being known as the SS. Annunziata school, and stayed there until c. 1516 when Sarto married Lucrezia. The relationship between Andrea and Franciabigio seems to have deteriorated with the events surrounding the Annunziata commission which Andrea received at the end of 1509. It was in the Sapienza that Andrea became acquainted with Jacopo Sansovino the sculptor and the two became close friends. It was also there that Rosso and Pontormo's apprenticeships, or assistantships in the case of Rosso, took place.[14] Certainly the group at the *Sapienza* must have been a lively and inspiring one into which Pontormo and Rosso became assimilated; we can only hope that at some point in the future more will be learned about that environment. Andrea's next major studio move came sometime after 15 October 1520 when he purchased a piece of land in the via del Mandorlo (now the via Giuseppe Giusti, 43) at the intersection with the via San Sebastiano (now via Gino Capponi, 22) and built a house facing the latter and a *bottega* facing the former.[15] The assumption is that Andrea worked there until the end of his life.

Although portraits do not specifically fall within the scope of this thesis, one portrait does provide unusual evidence for Sarto's workshop practice, albeit much later in his career; the drawings for the *Girl reading Petrarch* (c. 1526-9; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi) (Fig. 56) make for an interesting addendum. Both sides of the drawing in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 289 (Figs. 57 & 58) have colour inscriptions. Shearman transcribes them as: 289r: *nazo ango..., verde, bigio* and 289v: *bacho* ? *di bianco, verde, cholor bigiastre* ? and *bigio* again.[16] Perhaps the need to write simple pigment names would imply communication with another artist. The authorship by Sarto has never been questioned post-1687, and it seems the association with one of his close female relatives makes this a near certainty.[17] However, a similar portrait in the Uffizi Tribuna inventory of 1589 bears an attribution to Pontormo, and the thought

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14 For further discussion of the nature of Rosso's contact with Andrea, see Franklin, *Rosso*, 6ff.

15 For references on these moves, dates and locations see *Andrea*, 79ff; Shearman, *Andrea*, 2ff and Freedberg, *Andrea, cat. rais.*, 266ff. For more on the Sapienza, see above, Chapter 4, n. 3. For the document purchasing the land, see: Freedberg, *Andrea, cat. rais.*, 271 from A.S.F. Notarile antecosimiano, B 2333 (Rogiti di Ser Scipione Braccesi, atti del 1519 al 1524) c. 96v.

16 See Shearman, *Andrea*, 367-8, plates 150-1.

17 On the identity of the sitter, see Shearman, *Andrea*, 270-71.

of some sort of collaborative relationship between the two, as Pontormo had with Michelangelo at about the same time, remains an attractive but unprovable prospect.[18] The fact that Rosso used very similar colour inscriptions on his Volterra *Deposition* altarpiece also bears mentioning as a practice perhaps passed on from Andrea.

Perhaps merely as a result of stipulations in the commissions, two fresco cycles dominate Andrea's early career: first, the *grisaille* cycle for the Compagnia dello Scalzo of the life of St. John the Baptist which would occupy him from 1509-1526; and second, Sarto's contributions to the two cycles in the atrium in SS. Annunziata. The first commission of which Vasari speaks is for the Florentine Chiostro dello Scalzo, for the confraternity of the same name.[19] The order, their "resolve being grander than their resources," decided to commision work from the increasingly popular yet still relatively unexperienced young painter.[20] The works there which would occupy him intermittently from 1509 - 1526 were painted in *grisaille* and as such are not considered of vital importance for his colouristic development; however this first commission must have had an influence on the direction taken by his stylistic development, and though not in colour, can tell us about his attitudes towards light and shade, and tonality. Early on, Sarto's works state strongly his interest in colour, and in the effects upon it by lighting. For Andrea, the inherent "hue" still revealed itself throughout the painting; he manages to dim shaded areas without going to the dark end of the scale which we see Leonardo using. He took white closer to the picture plane and dimmed colours at the back -- the same system which we will see him use in his colour works, creating a version of what would later be referred to as tonal unity. This behaviour of light on colour, revealed early in the Scalzo frescoes, remained an interest for Andrea throughout his career.

In September 1509, one month before Andrea took up work in the atrium of SS. Annunziata, the progress of the fresco cycle there would probably best be termed as abortive. Thus far there were but two images in the atrium: the first for the cycle of the *Life of San Filippo Benizzi* in the atrium of SS. Annunziata begun by Cosimo Rosselli with *San Filippo Taking the Habit* but left unfinished upon his death in 1507, and the second by Baldovinetti, for the *Life of the Virgin* cycle, which will be

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18 See Shearman, *Andrea*, 270ff and Freedberg, *Andrea, cat. rais.*, 183ff: "*un quadro in tavola ritrattovi una donna a sedere con un libro in mano, con sua cornice simile (di noce), alta br. 1 3/4 e largh br. uno _ di mano di Jacopo da Pontormo*" (Arch. Sopr. Gallerie, MS.70, c.29).

19 See John Shearman, "The Chiostro dello Scalzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* (November 1960): 207-220; for relevant documents see: Shearman, *Andrea*, docs. 32-36; 38-46; 51; 52-57; 59-77; 79-82; 84-85; 88; 90-91 from: A.S.F. Comp. Rel. Soppr., 1198, No. 28, *Libro B.*

20 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:345: "*... essendo più ricchi d'animo che di danari...*"; Vasari/Bull, 2:131.

discussed below.[21] It is likely the Sarto/Franciabigio partnership received the commission via connections through Franciabigio's family, but the machinations of the monk responsible for the work, Fra Mariano, ensured that Sarto received more of the work than his associate.[22] Sarto painted his portion of the Benizzi cycle between October, 1509 and autumn, 1510.[23] It consists of five arch-topped frescoes on the west and south walls of the atrium. Andrea's contribution involves five scenes: *San Filippo Benizzi Clothing the Naked, Rebuking the Gamblers, Healing the Possessed Woman, Resurrection of the Child* and *Miracles of the Relics* (Figs. 59 - 63).[24] As one moves through the narrative the colour composition and palette become more sophisticated. Initially, in the first two images of *San Filippo Clothing the Naked* (Fig. 59), and *Rebuking the Gamblers* (Fig. 60), Andrea organised the composition

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21 Last fresco of the series inscribed MDX. For stylistic reasons, Freedberg, *Andrea, text*, 7-14 gives an unconvincing proposal for the execution order of the frescoes being 3, 4, 5, 1, 2. There seems no firm reason to overturn Vasari's asccount which says: "... in a short time of the whole task he finished the first three scenes and unveiled them." Vasari/Bull, 2:134; Vasari/Barocchi, 4:348: "*... finì del tutto in non molto tempo le prime tre storie e le scoperse...*" He then continues to describe the *Clothing the Naked, Rebuking the Gamblers* and *Casting out the Evil Spirit*. Shearman, *Andrea*, 198-202; see especially 199-200 concords the original Vasarian reading, giving 1 - 3 as October, 1509 - February, 1510 and 4 - 5 as late summer - autumn, 1510. For the discussion of the entire commission, including the pitting of Franciabigio against Andrea, see Vasari/Barocchi, 4:347-350 and 352-354 and Vasari/Bull, 2:133-135 and 136-137. For an eighteenth century cleaning project in the *Chistricino*, see: Roberta Lapucci, "Restauri tardo settecenteschi alle pitture del Chiostrino dei voti della SS. Annunziata," *Rivista d'Arte* 39 (1987): 461-474. Since SS. Annunziata is the original site for the Servite order, founded in Florence in 1233, it is not surprising that the Serviti would choose to have scene from the life of one of Florence's and the order's most important figures whose cult was approved by Leo X in 1516. However, worth further exploration in another context is the fact that Sarto's cycle was painted before San Filippo's cult was approved by Leo X in 1516, and long before his canonisation in 1671 by Clement X. Vasari is incorrect in stating that San Filippo was founder (*autore*) of the order; that was accomplished by St. Bonfilius in Florence in 1233, when San Filippo would have only been 10 years of age; San Filippo did not enter the order until 1254, was ordained in 1259 and on 5 June, 1267 became the fifth Superior General of the order. He was proposed as a papal candidate but refused and fled Florence for Todi in Umbria. See: "Saint Philip Benizzi" in: *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 17 vols. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967-79), 11:273-4 and "Servites" in 13:131ff. The commission in Vasari's narrative seems somewhat casual; the connection between SS. Annunziata, the choice of San Filippo Benizzi as the cycle visible upon entry into the church complex, the Medici Pope and Andrea needs to be developed further in another context.

22 See McKillop, 8ff.

23 For payment documents regarding this cycle see: Shearman, *Andrea*, Docs. 10-16 all in A.S.F. Convento 119, No. 172.

24 Kaftal does not mention the Sarto contributions to this cycle; he cites and illustrates the Rosselli fresco but the source for the events in Sarto's images remains a mystery. See George Kaftal, *Iconography of the saints in Italian painting from its beginnings to the early XVIth century* (Florence: Sansoni, 1952-78), vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting*, 847-8. Given the importance of the saint for Florence it seems surprising that there are so few scenes of the Saint. Kaftal later lists banner scene in San Fiorenzo, Perugia of 1476 by Bonfigli showing the Virgin presenting the habit to Benizzi; see vol. 2: *Iconography of Saints in Central and South Italian schools of painting* (1965), 920-2. And he also lists a scene now in the John G. Johnson collection in Philadelphia showing the *Miracle of the Relics*; see vol. 3: *Iconography of Saints in the Painting of the Northeast of Italy* (1978), 875-6.

with simple repetitions of the same hues: lilac, blue, grey, turquoise, olive and brown, which appear in the lower foreground figures and repeat in the background. Andrea modelled these figures with *chiaroscuro* rather than colour modelling, a style which he would not retain long. In the third fresco, *San Filippo Healing the Posessed Woman* (Fig. 61), he increased the range of the palette by introducing colour change (*cangiante*) in figures such as the posessed woman and the standing man to the far right; the same hues remain, however they are no longer applied in solid blocks of figure drapery. The background also begins to lose its importance as a unifier of colour composition. Whereas the background in the first scenes held each major hue, in the later scenes it changed to a neutral tone representing architecture; as such it serves more as a backdrop for the more complex rhythms of colours in the composition. In the fourth and fifth scenes, the setting changes to an indoor scene and with this the lighting system becomes much more complex; Andrea began to be concerned with the fall of shadows which are created by the surrounding open pilasters -- form on form, rather than simply shadows within a form.

After a falling out with the monk who commissioned the *Benizzi* cycle over the amount of payment, Andrea stopped working in the cloister; however when the monk refused to dismiss Sarto, the artist promised to do two more scenes, which he indeed completed in the next few years.[25] These scenes contributed to the *Life of the Virgin* cycle begun by Baldovinetti in 1460-2 and for which Franciabigio painted the *Betrothal of the Virgin* during late summer/autumn of 1513; Andrea's specific start and end date remain ambiguous.[26] Andrea added the *Journey of the Magi* and the *Birth of the Virgin* and the cycle was finished with Pontormo's *Visitation* and Rosso's *Assunta*, both to be discussed in subsequent chapters.[27] In the *Journey of the Magi* (Fig. 64), generally accepted to have been finished in 1511, Andrea returned again to an outdoor setting, and the lighting follows this locational constraint. With no architectural structure to cast shadows, he brought out the sense of the volume of independent forms, but had not yet reached the full capability of *chiaroscuro*. On the right side of the composition, the interplay of light within the concentrated figure group continues his interests in the fifth scene of the Benizzi cycle. Andrea created each figure again with a tonal use of colour modelling, the shadows dimming but not going to black or becoming altogether shrouded. He also used colour change more freely and frequently here; whereas previously yellow local-hued *cangiante* drapery would consistently change to red in the shadows, now it would change to either red or

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25 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:349-50 and Vasari/Bull, 2:136-7.

26 For payments to Franciabigio dated 21 August, 30 August, 20 September 1513 and one only 1513 see McKillop, 247 all from A.S.F., Conv. soppr., 119, No. 705 (*Libro del Camarlingo, Entrata e uscita*, October 1512-1516).

27 For the documents pertaining to these two frescoes, see Shearman, *Andrea*, Docs. 18-29.

lilac with the dependence on local hue lost. Yet in keeping with his interest in tonal unity, Andrea handled all colours on the same tonal level, regardless of the colour in the shadows. This resulted in a palette which itself falls in the mid-tones; we find little sense of saturation or bleaching of the forms. The main figures are well-lit because they turn to the light, evidence of Andrea's developing his interst in the use of natural setting and lighting. Whereas in the Benizzi cycle, Andrea organized the colour by repeating the foreground in the background, in the *Journey of the Magi*, the colours stated in the centre of the work (red, yellow, white and lilac) are not so rigorously and singly repeated. We are moved through the painting by these colours as we were earlier, but now the colour can appear anywhere. The flow through the work is contained only by "non-canonical" coloured drapery at the extreme right and left. It seems in this later fresco, Andrea made more virtuosic use of the devices he introduced in the Benizzi cycle. If we compare Andrea's work to Franciabigio's later *Betrothal of the Virgin* (1513; Florence: SS. Annunziata, atrium) it is clear that, although the two artists share common ground in palette choice and modelling techniques, Andrea far surpassed his colleage in terms of sophisitication of light and understanding the impact that light and atmosphere could and should have on colour.

It is not until the *Birth of the Virgin* (inscr. 1514; Florence: SS. Annunziata, atrium) (Fig. 65) generally considered the masterpiece of his early work, that we get a complete and full statement of this early style. Shearman lauds the colour in this painting as a logical transition from colour change to an indefinite impression of the colour; rather than using a specific hue or mixture of two specific hues to obtain relief, Andrea used a variety of desaturated hues mixed in layers over one another so that we are never truly able to determine the actual local hue of the drapery. Additionally Shearman sees it as the beginning of Sarto's move away from strict tonal unity; that is to say, Andrea began to acknowledge that colours which are light or pale in tone will be lighter in shadow than dark ones. At the same time, Sarto showed his displeasure with the suppression of intensity by tonal unity, as the depiction of colours having the same tonal range of light and shadow diminishes their individual potential for highest intensity.[28]

According to the dictates of the narrative in the *Birth of the Virgin*, the scene takes place in an indoor setting, with very subdued lighting, and less use of cast shadows. Andrea controlled the lighting system with the fall of shadows form on form or within form; in general the lighting falls evenly and diffusely creating consistent modelling. Andrea took advantage of all methods of modelling, with hues in the background undergoing very little dimming and changing. In the figure beside the woman with the infant Mary, Andrea disposed colours over an individual form

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28 Shearman, *Andrea*, 137.

with a technique in which the change in hue and modelling modulates over one piece of drapery from hue change to saturation change modelling. This strongly recalls the *Libyan Sibyl* in Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel in which Michelangelo further complicates the issue by juxtaposing very similar hues of lining and drapery.[29] In both figures the artist used red to yellow *cangiante* for the upper layer of drapery; this technique, together with the constraints put on the colour by tonal unity and the interior setting, contributes to the soft, subdued, controlled feel of the palette which contains beautiful mid-range hues of lilac, green, red, yellow and blue. Andrea's arrangement of these hues and tones throughout the painting is made more convincing by the placement of figures in relatively shallow space, as this stops the narrow tonal range from flattening depth. He used lilac and red as both object colours and as a shadow, spreading the colour disposition throughout the painting rather than containing it in blocks of three-part colour modelled drapery, a technique Shearman terms "broken colour". Two rectangles contain the exceptional and complex rhythmical play of hues: the figure to the left of the frontal figure as well as the figure second from the left contain all the colours of the first group on the left side of the painting. The bedside group differs from this group in the inclusion of blue in the plate behind the bed, the caps, and the figure behind the bed; the pale blue bedcover and lilac drapery at the right draw further attention to the fact that this is the scene of the principle event in the narrative. In this fresco we have the sense that Andrea has completely mastered his medium, with a grasp of tonal unity, subtle use of palette and colour composition, and an atmosphere which now is correct for interior space, yet even more controlled and planned than a mere representation of the dim light of a bedside scene.

Throughout the last years of the 1510s panel paintings account for considerably more of Sarto's production than fresco. During this period, in his work on the *San Gallo Annunciation*, the St. Tobias altarpiece, the *Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine*, the panels for the Borgherini bedroom, the *Madonna of the Harpies* and the *Disputa*, Sarto took many of the ideas developed earlier in fresco and explored the additional possibilities available through use of oil. Taddeo di Dante dei Castiglione commissioned the *San Gallo Annunciation* (1512; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti) (Fig. 66) for the Augustinian church of San Gallo; the altarpiece was moved to San Jacopo tra' Fossi in 1531 after the destruction of San Gallo.[30] Clearly

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29 For another discussion of Andrea's debt in this fresco to the Sistine Chapel, see Hall, *Meaning*, 144-5.

30 Shearman points out, that his development in panel painting lags slightly behind that in fresco; see Shearman, *Andrea*, 138. The painting was restored in 1978: *Andrea*, 94; brief restoration reports are contained within each catalogue entry for images in the 1986 show. Vasari tells us that Pontormo painted the predella, being at that time a disciple of Andrea's and furthermore that Bronzino told Vasari that he heard from Pontormo that Rosso worked on that

here, Andrea divided the composition into two halves, the Virgin on the left and the Gabriel group on the right. Gabriel appears as a perfect example of tonal unity; however, under strong light the colour modelling seems to go to extremes of black and white, an uncharacteristic palette for Andrea. Under the lighting of the background angels we see the more typical pure colour modelling with a veil of *sfumato* and *chiaroscuro*, creating the blurring and dimming we have come to expect of Andrea's background figures. Equally, Andrea divided the palette across the central axis, although this is in part governed by the iconographic tradition requiring that the Virgin wear blue. The angels have no such guidelines and here we see his love of almost consciously beautiful groupings of colours, made somewhat incongruous by the black used in the Gabriel figure, making the narrow-ranged modelling of the other angels seem flat, and yet somehow more "chromatic" in nature. He also used the swash of the black wing not only to break up this angel group, but also to make ambiguous the spatial position of the back angels, increasing their ethereal quality. Compositionally, the Virgin provides absolute blocks of hue which calm this flurry of colour; the only colouristic link appears in the blue of her robe which Andrea then repeated in the sleeve of the right-hand angel and again in the distant hills.

The *Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine* (inscr. 1512; Dresden: Gemäldegalerie) shows a similar interest in tonal unity and in this work Andrea also resorted to using black as a creator of shadows, particularly in St. Margaret's drapery and under the canopy. However, in this work he was also willing to use white, in Catherine's dress and the Virgin's knee. In the *Mystic Marriage*, hue change modelling appears -- for example in the yellow to pink to purplish-blue of Catherine's tunic -- but with greater subtlety than in the San Gallo work. The range and variety of hue make this a clear work of experimentation: for example, Andrea used a desaturated green to create the canopy above, and yet fully saturates the green in St. Margaret's dress. In the Tobias altarpiece (1512; Vienna: Kunsthistorisches

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panel as well: Vasari/Barocchi, 4:354; Vasari/Bull, 2:138. For a discussion of the questions of whether the Dublin predella (*Pietà with St. Bartholomew, St. Lawrence, St. Francis and St. Peter, St. Benedict, St. Zenobius, St. Jerome and St. Apollonia*; Dublin: National Gallery) is by Pontormo and for either the San Gallo *Annunciation*, see Janet Cox-Rearick, *The Drawings of Pontormo*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964), 1:137-8. She hypothesises that the images were designed by Pontormo but executed by another hand, around 1517-18 in connection with the Visdomini altar. These ideas appear in earlier form in: Sydney J. Freedberg & Janet Cox-Rearick, "Pontormo's Predella for the San Michele Visdomini Altar," *Burlington Magazine* 103 (1961): 7-8. The dating of the painting seems generally accepted as 1512 (see *Andrea*, 94 and 45). On the connection of this image with Fra Bartolommeo and Filippino Lippi's *Vision of St. Bernard*, see above, Chapter Three, 8ff. For a further discussion of iconography, see: Antonio Natali, "Il Nuovo Adamo. E l'Antico," *Paragone* 40 (November 1989): 23ff. Philippe Costamagna & Anna Fabre, "Di alcuni problemi della bottega di Andrea del Sarto," *Paragone* 42 (January 1991): 15-28 discusses in connection with this work other assistants of Andrea's in addition to Rosso and Pontormo, mainly Pier Francesco Foschi and Jacopino del Conte.

Museum), Sarto used almost jarring combinations of saturated hues, with approaches to tonal unity in some of the figures, but not all.[31]

Together with these first two early works, the *San Gallo Annunciation* provides a reminder of the importance of the school of San Marco in Florence at this time. This instability of colour shown in the Gabriel figure was brought to Florence by Fra Bartolommeo after his exposure to the works of Bellini in Venice; his work which stemmed from that trip would have on one level or another been accessable to Andrea, as the *God the Father with Sts. Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Siena* (Fig. 38), was in the Frate's San Marco studio and his *Vision of St. Bernard* (Fig. 34) could be seen in the Badia from about 1506.[32] In areas of both images, but particularly in the figure of St. Catherine in the Lucca altarpiece we see a similar reluctance to commit to a local hue; however, it does seem that of the two artists, Andrea made the bolder statement of this technique. The *Annunciation* also gives us an example of panel painting from this period which shows his concern with the suppression of intensity by tonal unity. However, if we look at the Tobias altarpiece, and areas of the *Mystic Marriage*, it would seem his interest lay more in beautiful passages of saturated hues. Thus we can say that at this point Andrea -- through experimentation with various approaches to colour and light -- has absorbed the systems of Florentine colour at the time and can now move on to see what he can do with his new found technique.

In 1515 Andrea del Sarto took part in an unusual commission by Salvi Borgherini in connection with the marriage of his son Pierfrancesco, a Florentine banker, to Margherita Acciaiuoli. The elder Borgherini requested chairs, *cassoni*, panelling and a marriage bed to be decorated with scenes from the story of Joseph by Andrea, Francesco Granacci and the younger artists Pontormo and Bacchiacca.[33] According to Allan Braham's reconstruction, the most detailed to date, Andrea's two

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31 For the patron and commission, see: John Kent Lydecker, "The patron, date and original location of Andrea del Sarto's Tobias altarpiece, *Burlington Magazine* 127 (1985): 149-55. Andrea painted the work for Leonardo di Lorenzo Morelli between March and October 1512 for the Morelli altar in Sta. Lucia in Settimello.

32 Shearman, *Andrea*, 136-7.

33 These were all part of the decorations, apparently dismantled in 1584; see Braham, "Borgherini": 754-765 and Raffaelle Monti, *Andrea del Sarto* (Milan: Edizioni di Communità), 47-51. Andrea's panels were cleaned recently for the 1986 show; *Andrea*, 105. The choice of these particular four artists presumably is bound, on the part of Andrea and Pontormo, to Andrea having worked around 1512 on a *Madonna* for Salvi Borgherini, and Granacci on Pierfrancesco's great friendship with the former's close friend Michelangelo. For the lamentably general contemporary descriptions of the original locations of the panels in the bedroom, see Shearman, *Andrea*, 232. On Bacchiacca, see: Lada Nikolenko, *Francesco Ubertini called Il Bacchiacca*, (Locust Valley, N.Y.: J.J. Augustin, 1966); Howard S. Merritt, "Bachiacca Studies: The Uses of Imitation" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1958); and *Bacchicca and His Friends*, ed. Howard Merrit (ex. cat.), (Baltimore, Baltimore Museum of Art, 1961).

scenes together with Pontormo's two smaller scenes and one by Granacci would have been set in the wall above the head of the bed, with Pontormo's long scene and Bacchiacca's *cassoni* scenes and smaller *tornaletti* lower down around the bed itself. However, Borghini states that Andrea's two scenes were *spalliere di cassone*; perhaps these were set against the wall and would then be read in continuum with the smaller Pontormos and the smaller Grancci mounted in the wall.[34] There is also the problem that Vasari clearly describes Pontormo's panels as being part of *cassone*. They do not fit in size with any of the longer panels, thus allowing them to be side panels, nor is it possible to make any sense of that type of arrangement in terms of the narrative. Without more detailed documentary or physical evidence reconstructions must remain in the realms of conjecture.

Despite the debate over placement, the narrative order remains relatively secure. From this it is clear that in the scenes for the bedroom colour plays a crucial and pivotal role. If we compare the palette choices in the upper scenes with those mounted nearer the floor -- for example either of Andrea's scenes in which browns and yellows dominate -- with Pontormo's *Distribution of Grain to Joseph's Brothers and the Arrest of Simeon*, full of pure gem-like hues, we see a dramatic change in saturation which, in a commission in which the works are meant to hang as an ensemble, would be tied as much to physical placement as to individual style.[35] Furthermore, as Braham notes there is a change in the colour of Joseph's robes from yellow in the wall panels to pink and blue in the *cassone* and bed panels, further emphasising not only the change in hues and palettes between these two areas, the connection at this point made between Joseph and Christ in the use of Christ's traditional blue and pink robes, but also that colour was a crucial element of this decoration.[36] Braham is incorrect in his identification as Joseph of the figure in red with a bundle under his arm in *Pharoah consults Joseph about his dreams* scene. It is clear if we follow the narrative that this figure is most likely the butler: at the far right, Pharoah sends the figure and his companion, dressed in a green tunic and pinkish red leggings, to release Joseph from prison; the three are shown twice on the

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34 See Raffaello Borghini, *Il Riposo*, ed. Antonio Maria Biscioni, notes Giovanni Bottari (Milan: Societa Tipografica de'Classici Italiani, 1807 -- originally published 1584), 420; Ellen Callmann, "Apollonio di Giovanni and Painting for the Early Renaissance Room," *Antichità Viva* 27 (1988): 11 discusses the introduction of bases to *spalliere* which make them immovable and of the continuation of the bed's cornice in that of the room thereby unifying the decoration of furniture and the room into one whole. For more on *spalliere*, see: Anne B. Barriault, *Spalliera paintings of renaissance Tuscany* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994).

35 Graham Smith has correctly identified this scene as the *Distribution and Arrest*, rather than Braham's identification of the image as the *Triumph of Joseph*; see: Graham Smith, "Cosimo I and the Joseph Tapestries for the Palazzo Vecchio," *Renaissance and Reformation* 6 (1982): 195, n. 6.

36 For Braham's comment see Braham, "Borgherini": 757.

stairs, with the figure in red not a prisoner but one in control; we have the clearest statement of their relative roles at the foot of the stairs with Joseph dressed in dark green slumped between the other two figures. In the central scene, the two appear to the left of Pharoah, while Joseph, now "dressed in fine linen", a pink cloak with fur collar, kneeling in front of Pharoah.[37] At this point Joseph no longer wears the yellow of his earlier life but now has a whole new colour identity, more likely linked to Pharoah's raising of his status with "robes of fine linen", a "gold chain", and a chariot (Genesis 41:43). If we can accept the prior idea though, the reason for the change in hues becomes clearer in the subsequent scene where we move to the lower portion of the decoration surrounding the bed.

Iconographically, the change in emphasis which corresponds to the change in robe colour and location, beginning with Pontormo's scene of the Joseph's *Distribution of Grain to Joseph's Brothers and the Arrest of Simeon* marks the pre- and post-captivity stages of Joseph's life, the periods before and after the seven years of famine, and the beginning of Joseph's gaining retribution upon his brothers; iconographically, this image marks the point in the parallel with Christ as Salvator Mundi due to the numerous inscriptions in the scene. This is possibly a link to the patron's given name Salvi, but it is probable that a tie between the narratives of Joseph and Christ exists as well.[38] Certainly at this point Joseph becomes the saviour of Egypt in that through advance planning he saves the Egyptians -- and his family -- from famine. Joseph's gesture could be the same as that of Christ as Salvator Mundi although at this point it is likely that Joseph uses the gesture to send Simeon, kneeling at the back in blue, to prison.[39]

In terms of Andrea's overall colour style, Shearman says that with the *Scenes from the early life of Joseph* (Fig. 67) and *Pharoah consults Joseph about his dreams* (Fig. 68) (1515-16; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti) Andrea reached the panel equivalent of the *Birth of the Virgin* and that the *unione* of colour here is a "signpost of a new era."[40] In his own four episodes, Pontormo contained the colours within brilliantly-hued blocks of drapery. However, Andrea extended the experiment

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37 Freedberg refers to Joseph in this scene as dressed in the "raiment of a minister of Pharoah" although he does not state which figure this would be; see Freedberg, *Andrea, text*, 39.

38 For the connection of Salvi Borgherini and the Salvator Mundi theme, see Braham, "Borgherini": 762.

39 The ordering and identification of the subsequent Bacchiacca scenes, in particular those identified by Braham as *Joseph orders the imprisonment of his brothers* (?) and *Simeon taken to prison*, both smaller Borghese panels, remains uncertain. Throughout all his scenes, Bacchiacca turns to distinctive costumes, and hues to highlight each figure in the narrative; we are thus able to identify each figure according to his attire and follow him through the story. Certainly on the basis of costume and the appearance, two or three figures in both scenes are in some manner or other and are likely the same person; however, an examination of the colours in all the Bacchiacca scenes is necessary before a full reading can occur.

40 Shearman, *Andrea*, 138-9.

by continuing his development of broken colour and using a much more restrained palette, though as stated above, this to an extent pertains to the placement within the room of his particular images. Andrea returned compositionally to his interest in repetition of colours, as he did in the *Benizzi* cycle, however the increased number of figures and range of palette make the composition appear more complex. However, both artists -- but particularly Andrea -- used colour to lead us through the scene and to punctuate each relevant area of the narrative, such that we can follow the story through by following the pertinent hue: for example, in the first scene we follow Joseph's butter-yellow tunic throughout and in the second scene, it is the jailer's red tunic rather than Joseph's drab prisoner's clothes which lead us through the narrative. Only after Joseph has been released and is raised to a new status does his resplendent pink cloak mark his new rank.

Following this work, a friar of Santa Croce commissioned Andrea to execute a panel now known as the *Madonna of the Harpies* (inscr. 1517; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi) (Fig. 69) for the high altar of the church of the nuns of San Francesco, formerly in via de' Macci behind Santa Croce in Florence.[41] Vasari tells us that it was held to have "singular and truly rare beauty" at the time; early commentators made the point that the Madonna was on the altar almost like an apparition and that the incense smoke came from the altar as well.[42] According to Shearman's view, Andrea showed at the time that pigments no longer posed any limitations for him; he now completely understood lit requirements and represented plasticity with a wide range of pigments.[43] It is quite possible as well that Andrea realised that this technical ease made possible the sort of intense illusion or realism commented on above, and consciously used it to enhance the fantasy. In palette and colour compositions, he has now made advances; for his hues and modelling styles he chose a wide array, from the fully saturated, colour-modelled red drapery and *cangiante* shawl of the St. John the Evangelist to the tonal drapery of St. Francis. However, compositionally there is still a disparity between St. Francis, who is required by his order to be in what here comes out as brownish-grey, and the other two figures which Sarto chose to make diverse on one hand and complex on the other. He began to resolve this problem by infusing St. Francis' drapery with subtle, unstable and vibrating colours, rather than

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41 For the contract see Shearman, *Andrea*, Doc. 30 from: Notarile ante-cosimiano, A.694 (ser Freancesco Anselmi, 1514-15), c.234r-235r also published in Freedberg, *Andrea*, *cat. rais.*, 74-5.

42 See John Shearman, *Only Connect... Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 59-60; Vasari/Barocchi, 4:358: "... *singolare e veramente rara bellezza...*"; Vasari/Bull, 2:139.

43 Shearman, *Connect*, 140-1.

simply creating it with black to white modelling.[44] Whereas in the *San Gallo Annunciation* this disparity was jarring, here Andrea was able to achieve much greater mastery of tonal unity, giving consistency to hues; in addition, the range in *chiaroscuro* has been pushed to the lower level, harmonizing the composition with a darkening and shrouding effect. Between the powerful forms of St. Francis and St. John the Evangelist, almost sculptural in their grey robes -- and here again the connection with Jacopo Sansovino surfaces -- Andrea created in the Madonna a beautiful passage of overlapping colours, each chromatically independent, yet still organized and bound together by tonal unity.[45] Andrea subjected each of the six hues juxtaposed in the Virgin, arranged with skill down her left arm, to the same range of light and shade which makes them appear as a unified, yet chromatically diverse whole. The pairing of hues around the Madonna's left arm seems a clear illustration of Andrea's mastery of tonal unity, of pigments and of his reverie in the colours with which he works.

The colouristic and atmospheric concerns evident in the *Madonna of the Harpies* are continued and expanded in his next large altarpiece, the *Disputa* (Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti) (Fig. 70). Again, the altarpice would have originally hung in the destroyed church of San Gallo, possibly in the Peri family chapel.[46] As the dispute over the date of this work centres on pertinent stylistic questions, it merits discussion. Vasari mentioned this work between the *Bust of Christ* in SS. Annunziata and his treatment of Andrea's trip to France of 1518-19. Freedberg, citing the articulation of the drawing, the *chiaroscuro*, and fineness of proportion places this painting after the *Madonna of the Harpies* and gives Vasari's account as reason to believe it to date from before the trip to France; he proposes 1517 to early 1518. Alternatively, Shearman proposed a date of 1519-20, after the French journey and before the *Tribute to Caesar* of 1521, arguing that stylistically 1518 is too close to the *Harpies* and that Andrea's style between 1517 and 1520 is very difficult to assess. This argument does not seem quite adequate enough to place the painting post-France. The *Disputa* appears stylistically too close to the *Harpies* and not close enough to the *Vienna Pietà*, dated c. 1519-20 to which it should presumably be closely related in order to share this date. In both the *Madonna of the Harpies* and the *Disputa*, Andrea arranged the figures to create a sophisticated lighting system, the complex cast shadows making deep areas of *chiaroscuro* between the forms. Furthermore, these two paintings share in common the system of modelling and technique for the representation of folds of drapery. Compare for example the folds of the sleeves of the Franciscan saints in each panel, as well as the cuffs of the

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44 Shearman, "Developments," 197.

45 For the connections with Sansovino's sculpture see *Andrea*, 47ff.

46 Cleaned in 1985; see *Andrea*, 115.

Madonna and the St. Peter Martyr. In modelling the draperies, such as the blue drapery of the *Madonna* and that of St. Sebastian and St. Peter Martyr in the later work, Andrea did not go to the light end of the scale, to white, as much in the earlier work as he does in the *Disputa*. Rather, in the *Disputa* he shows interest in an increased range of lightness, which he futher develops in the *Vienna Pietà*. In the palette, Andrea almost entirely repeated the pink, white, gold, blue and red of the Madonna in the Magdalene figure, apart from the blue used in the Virgin, which is iconographically demanded for her figure. Compositionally he used complex figures such as the St. John the Evangelist and the St. Lawrence to balance the bold monochrome draperies of the Franciscan and Dominican saints. For these reasons, it seems more likely that the *Disputa* should be aligned with the *Madonna of the Harpies*. Therefore, Andrea executed this work prior to his journey to France; it seems that such a trip which certainly would have caused a greater stylistic change than that seen between these two works.

In the *Disputa*, Andrea depicts increasingly directional lighting, in contrast to the more formalised *chiaroscuro* of earlier works. The light is also dimmed and greyed by the storm clouds gathering in the sky above the saints. Perhaps if the exact original location is ever discovered this may give us a further clue as to the original lighting conditions. He used this selective light to pick out some forms and shroud others, yet the modelling remains consistent in relation to the system of lighting. He seems by this point to understand the varying reaction of different colours to light; in this he departs from one of Leonardo's ideas, indeed the basic principle of tonal unity, that all colours when lit display the same depth of shadow and light. In the panel the strongest light falls at the left, and dissipates in intensity but not in the paleness of the highlights it creates. The way in which the forms are lit, a blend of *sfumato*, tonal unity and *chiaroscuro*, indicates to us where in space they are placed, depending on where on the form and with what intensity the light falls.

Andrea's palette consisted of hues of greater complexity, laid down with occasional passages of great sophistication. He used colour modelling put under *chiaroscuro* to form his figures, creating a system which stops just short of black and likewise never goes to white; this contributes to the sense of dimmed light and subtle colours. The folds of the drapery now have a crispness and edginess which is adopted and expanded later by his two associates in works such as Rosso's Volterra *Deposition*. More than in the *Madonna of the Harpies*, or in fact any earlier work, Andrea here seems to be depicting actual fabrics reacting to light rather than hues modelled in an abstract way to represent notationally drapery; this is a unique moment in his *oeuvre*. Later, in works such as the San Salvi *Last Supper* and the *Assunte*, some areas almost seem like brilliantly hewed marble, so hard is their surface. In organizing the whole, he grouped colours in blocks. We again have

passages of strong chromatic value in the front, such as the figure of the Magdalene, and the strength of drapery asserts the more "dull" parts such as the black and white robes of the Dominican saint. In the *Disputa* Andrea became adept, in panel -- as he was in fresco much earlier -- to place the figures with light according to the requirements of the setting, and then to cause the colours to react to these requirements as needed. As most of his early career consisted of fresco commissions, this later development of panel works seems logical, as these works done before the French trip, now in oil, would give him the opportunity to try his early ideas out in a new medium, one which has different requirements in terms of handling of paint, subject matter and scale.

Immediately following his discussion of the *Disputa*, Vasari tells us that King Francis I of France, having seen two pictures by Andrea through the agency of Giovambatista Puccini, invited the painter to come to France to live and work in his court.[47] Of the many paintings which Vasari described as being executed on this visit, the only one which remains known to us presently is the *Caritas* (inscr. 1518; Paris: Musée du Louvre) (Fig. 71).[48] Freedberg reports that the entire surface is badly worn, and the colours diminished, which make the discussion of lighting methods and modelling techniques difficult. However, some details about the composition and palette may still be discerned. Andrea organized the composition into simple areas of blue, dark blue, red and orange. The palette and handling seem different from those of the *Disputa*, for in this work Andrea seems to be moving towards the denial of the shrouding *chiaroscuro* seen in the early frescoes and in the two pre-France panels -- another departure from Leonardo -- which he developed much more in his later works. According to Vasari, Andrea missed his wife who stayed behind in Florence, and when the King gave him money to return to Italy to collect her and to bring back paintings and sculptures, Andrea returned to Florence for the rest of his life. The fact that the *Caritas* is in such poor condition -- as a result of an early transfer to canvas and subsequent cleanings -- coupled with it being the only large scale painting which survives from this sojourn, and the fact that we are not told what he may have seen while there, combine to make it difficult to discuss what effect this absence from his native Florence may have had on Andrea's work.[49] Certainly he continues the trends towards a lighter palette, increased range, lessened *chiaroscuro*, and crisp modelling

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47 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:366-370; Vasari/Bull, 2:145-6; also see *Andrea*, 50ff for a discussion of the French connection.

48 This painting, though not seen first hand, is important to the discussion as it is the only evidence of Andrea's work while in France.

49 On the transfer and cleaning, see Shearman, *Andrea*, 243; additionally, a *Portrait of a French Lady* survives in the Cleveland Museum of Art which is assumed on the basis of costume to be from this period; again, see Shearman, *Andrea*, 244.

seen in the *Disputa*, and these traits appear, in perhaps their strongest example, in the work following his return to Florence.

The *Vienna Pietà*(c. 1518-20; Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum) (Fig. 72) confirms the direction in which it seems Andrea's art had been moving since the *Disputa*.[50] This small panel painting displays increased luminosity in light and in colour. The handling of drapery in terms of texture has similarities with the *Disputa*; however the shroud of *chiaroscuro* has almost completely lifted. The heightened palette, pushed now by his use of white almost to the opposite end from the darkened *Madonna of the Harpies* and *Disputa*, still contains a full range, including green, blue, red, and lilac, the breadth of which is increased by the *cangiante* drapery in the angels and the white cloth on which Christ is placed. It hardly seems a coincidence that Andrea's pupils use this same increased presence of colour, albeit through stronger saturation in the case of Rosso, to heighten the emotional level in their paintings of the same subject, both done around this time; we refer here to the Volterra *Deposition* by Rosso Fiorentino, inscribed 1521, and Pontormo's *Pietà* at the Certosa of 1523-5. The reasons for the linkage of colour with raised emotion in *Pietàs* of this time are more appropriately discussed later. However it is important that Andrea seems to have been one of the earlier proponents of this change and that it occurred upon his return from what was perhaps his only departure from Tuscany.

Other than his ongoing *grisaille* work in the Scalzo and some lost wall paintings, Andrea had not worked in fresco since the *Nativity of the Virgin* of 1513-14. The cast of Medici involved in the commission and execution of the Poggio a Caiano decorations belies its status in early sixteenth century Florentine art; sometime before 1519, the Medici Pope Leo X had the idea of decorating the *Salone* in the Villa Medicea at Poggio a Caiano with scenes devoted to the memory of Lorenzo il

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50 On the possibility that this work has a French provenance, making the date somewhat earlier, see Janet Cox-Rearick, *The Collection of Francis I: Royal Treasures* (New York: Abrams, 1996), 163-4. Freedberg, *Andrea*, *cat. rais.*, 90, states that this painting was cleaned in 1953. Though not seen first hand, it is important to examine this painting because of its proximity to Andrea's return to France and the importance of this subject for Andrea's work and the work of his pupils. This painting falls midway in a series of paintings on this subject which Andrea brought to varying levels of completion. The first example, the *Borghese Pietà*, executed c. 1509 (Rome, Galleria Borghese) is a predella panel, associated with the Franciscan convent of Monte Domini; Shearman, *Andrea*, 197, Freedberg, *Andrea*, *cat. rais.*, 5-6; on the connection with the convent, see Antonio Natali and Alessandro Cecchi, *Andrea del Sarto: catalogo completo* (Florence: Cantini, 1989), 23. In 1515-16 Giovan Battista Puccinni commissioned him to do "a Dead Christ surrounded by some angels" (Vasari/Barocchi, 4:360-1;Vasari/Bull, 2:142); this painting, now lost, survives only in the engraving by Agostino Veneziano. Thus, the *Vienna Pietà* is the first work of this subject in his mature career which we have. Shearman cites various scholars as supporting the suggestion that this panel was seen in Agnolo Aretino's room in SS. Annunziata and commissioned by him as a work for private devotion; see Shearman, *Andrea*, 245.

Magnifico. He asked Cardinal Guilio de'Medici to commission the work who in turn charged Paolo Giovio, Bishop of Nocera, to assign the subjects. Ultimately it was Ottaviano de'Medici who had charge of the supervision of and payments to the artists.[51] In addition to all these figures, Vasari connects Duke Lorenzo de'Medici, part of whose wedding took place there, with the project as the one who chose the artists, thereby providing a possible link for Franciabigio being in charge as the painter had worked for the Duke in connection with his 1518 wedding. However Cox-Rearick cites Lorenzo's illness in November 1518 as a hinderance to his involvement and that at this point that Guilio became involved. In contrast, Freedberg states that Cardinal Giulio had responsibility for choosing the artists.[52]

Andrea, Pontormo and Franciabigio each had a third of the decoration, although we are told that the latter most likely had charge of the project, while Andrea di Cosimo Feltrini oversaw the architectural decoration. The frescoes remained incomplete on Leo X's death in 1521 and were finished later by Alessandro Allori c. 1582.[53] Shearman makes the important comment that the hiring of this group for such a major commission counts as official recognition for the SS. Annunziata school by the Medici in the same way that the Republic acknowledged the San Marco school.[54] Certainly the marked change in fortune of the two schools as a result of the political manoeuverings in Florence should not be overlooked, and the subsequent historical recognition of Andrea's pupils over Fra Bartolommeo's emphasises this point. Additionally, Andrea and Franciabigio on the one hand and Andrea and Pontormo on the other had worked together on a variety of occasions. Rosso's absence from this group since the atrium should be noted, as that was the only such joint project in which he participated. The relative influences among the artists will be discussed after Pontormo's image is introduced.

Andrea's contribution of *The Tribute to Caesar* (inscr. 1521; Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medicea) (Fig. 73) can be seen behind us and to the left when we enter the *Salone* from the main doorway. The natural lighting for this work falls from large windows to the left and right, although the light within the painting conforms to that of the closer left window. Andrea modelled the figures with pure colour, which he

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51 See also Janet Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty and Destiny in Medici Art: Pontormo, Leo X and the Two Cosimos* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 89ff and Silvestro Bardazzi and Eugenio Castellani, *La Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano* (Prato: Edizioni del Palazzo, 1981).

52 McKillop, 68-69; Freedberg, *Andrea, cat. rais.*, 100; Shearman, *Andrea*, 82-3 discusses the possibility of either Sarto or Franciabigio being head, but as McKillop's arguments seem more persuasive it seems the latter was indeed in charge. Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty*, 90ff states that Franciabigio's control may have only extended to laying out the room.

53 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:372-374; Vasari/Bull, 2:150. It is certainly not the purpose of this chapter to delve into the complexities of this fresco's iconography: for various opinions see: Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty, passim.*

54 Shearman, *Andrea*, 79.

used deftly to convey strong light; for example, colours still darken and decrease in range some when blocked by another figure. The palette now contains bright, vibrant, vivid hues, however it also must be remembered that this scene takes place outdoors, which makes any comparison, both with the much earlier Annunziata frescoes, and with any of the interior panel paintings, somewhat difficult. The location of the *Disputa* does remain indefinite and certainly does not have the interior specificity of the *Birth of the Virgin*; as such, the trend towards a lighter palette and more light-infused atmosphere seems confirmed by the lineage from the *Disputa* through the *Caritas* and the Vienna *Pietà* to the *Tribute to Caesar*. Compositionally, Shearman observes that repetition of colour reinforces the depth axis. Andrea again took the opportunity to use colour to organize his composition on a grand scale as he did not only in earlier fresco cycles but also in the much smaller Borgherini panels.[55] He used gold to achieve this ordering: it starts with a block at the left, follows this to the arm of the pointing man, and then tentatively through the Caesar group to the man over the railing whose body pose leads us to the golden giraffe. Equally, the colours lilac, blue, green and white, while being the main colours in the foreground group, also repeat in the railing group and the background. He played all this out on a unifying background of yellow. Andrea here reminds us of his wonderful talent with the fresco medium seen in the Annunziata murals, and equally shows that the advances which he made in oil were easily and almost effortlessly translated into another medium.

An important issue which arises in relation to the Poggio a Caiano frescoes is the question of a possible Roman trip in connection with the cycle. This should come as no surprise, as both the papal patron, and the fresco's overall Roman quality in terms of grandeur and scale, show the Medicean Pope making a Roman statement in his own Florentine home territory. In terms of specific influence, Vasari mentions a trip to Rome at the end of his life of Andrea, followed by a lengthy discussion of Sarto's reasons for leaving Rome and returning to Florence. In this passage Vasari somehow credits Rome with a potential to transform Andrea's style such that he would have " ... surpassed all the craftsmen of his time" had he stayed.[56] Vasari credits Sarto with a bewilderment and timidity of spirit in not remaining in Rome; his discussion of Fra Bartolommeo's reaction to Rome has a very similar tone and justification. Vasari's account together with the transformative effect he believes Rome to have may in part have contributed to the slightly lesser historical assessment of these two Florentine artists than that of their contemporaries who stayed in Rome.

A variety of issues could explain the Roman trip: Shearman posits that all of

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55 Shearman, "Developments," 208.

56 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:394: "*... se si fusse fermo in Roma, che egli averebbe avanzati tutti gl'artefici del tempo suo.*" Vasari/Bull, 2:165.

the artists made a trip around 1519-20 to discuss the Salone *modelli* with Leo X; alternatively, McKillop suggests they travelled to Rome to revise plans following the death of Duke Lorenzo de'Medici.[57] Certainly as Shearman suggests Andrea looked quite hard at the Stanza della Segnatura in terms of composition.[58] Sarto also adopted Raphael's approach to colour, particularly in the *School of Athens*, of arraying the brightly hued figures against or within an architectural framework done without a great deal of variety of hue; as evidence of this influence, note that Caesar's palace shines with a golden glow and Andrea keyed the figures exactly to the same tone and hue so that all seem suffused with this colour and light. For Raphael, perhaps because his scene takes place to some extent indoors, the greyish architecture does not suffuse the other hues in the same way. The remarkable thing about Andrea's fresco palette in this image is its clarity, lightness and unity, quite unlike the fully saturated Sistine figures. Certainly as will be discussed in the Pontormo section, the overall decorum of the villa as a country site would lend itself to this sort of treatment; however in the case of Sarto's work the subject does not demand for the same locational emphasis.

The contact in Rome with the newest statements by his compatriots seems to have affected Andrea in select ways. Unlike Fra Bartolommeo, Sarto had already developed a monumental figure style prior to his trip to Rome, as can be seen in works like the *Madonna of the Harpies* and the *Disputa* which rivals in scale and grandeur, if not in energy of pose, anything done in Rome. Compositionally, Andrea also had dealt already with movement through deep space, though the complexity which comes in the *Caesar* fresco does seem influenced to a certain degree by Raphael. What Sarto seems to have either rejected or not absorbed from Rome are the bright, fully saturated hues -- what we would now term primary hues -- used in the Sistine and later the Stanze and the sophisticated new modelling techniques of Michelangelo.

Around 1521, Andrea had begun work on a composition which would be perhaps the grandest altarpiece statement in Florence up to this time, with the exception of Fra Bartolommeo's unfortunately uncompleted *Pala del Gran Consiglio*: the two *Assunta* panels. Sarto ultimately created two versions of the Assumption theme: the *Panciatichi Assunta* (c.1521-3; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti) (Fig. 74)[59] was originally commissioned by Baccio d'Agnolo da Bartolomeo

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57 Janet Cox-Rearick makes the same suggestion regarding Pontormo's frescoes for the same location. See Shearman, *Andrea*, 86-8 who connects the trip with the *modelli*; Cox Rearick, *Drawings*, 37 and McKillop, 83ff link the journey with Lorenzo's death.

58 Shearman, *Andrea*, 88. Furthermore, the dwarf on the steps of Andrea's fresco almost works as a parody of Raphael's Diogenes figure; the figure is then repeated later by Pontormo in his portrait of Bronzino on the steps in *Jacob and Joseph in Egypt* for the Borgherini bedroom.

59 See, in particular, John Shearman, "Andrea del Sarto's Two Paintings of the

Panciatichi for his family chapel in the church of Notre-Dame du Confort in Lyon, and left incomplete at Andrea's death due to technical problems with the panels.[60] The second version of the composition, the *Passerini Assunta* (c. 1527; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti) (Fig. 75) actually was completed and installed in its intended location, Sant'Antonio dei Servi in Cortona, near Arezzo.[61] General consensus seems to be that Andrea had trouble with the Panciatichi panel, gave it up due to those problems or a combination of interruption by the plague and political trouble in France, and then reused the composition with modifications for the later work. It is doubtful that Margherita Passerini's heirs would have seen the former version which was in the posession of Bartolomeo Panciatichi's son after Sarto's death.[62] The two paintings will be discussed separately and in their chronological place, with comparative comments on colour made after the Passerini section.

In the *Panciatichi Assunta*, Andrea continued the idea, seen in his last major altarpiece the *Disputa*, of using highlights to establish the place of figures in depth, so that he heightened the highest parts of the figure with fairly strong additions of white; and they then became more shrouded as they moved back into space, this occuring

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Assumption," *Burlington Magazine* 51 (April 1959): 124-34 in which Shearman overturns the traditional dating of these works. Vasari/Barocchi, 4:370; Vasari/Bull, 2:148 gives the helpful information that Andrea left this work unfinished at his death, due to a split in the panel. Through the advantages of close observation, Freedberg tells us that the upper section is complete, while the lower left and extreme right show loss of paint. For the cleaning reports see: Nicoletta Bracci, Marco Ciatti & Adria Tortorelli, "Il restauro delle *Assunte* Panciatichi e Passerini di Andrea del Sarto," *OPD Restauro* 2 (1987): 17-26 and *Andrea*, 330ff. The same Baccio d'Agnolo who organised the Borgherini bedroom decorations apparently acted as intermediary in this commission as well; see *Andrea*, 52. Francis I, in his passion for Italian art commissioned works from many of the artists discussed including Fra Bartolommeo, Pontormo, Andrea, Ridolfo Ghirlandaio and in fact succeeded in luring Rosso to live the last years of his life in France.

60 *Andrea*, 122. Because of problems with the panels the work was neither sent to Lyons nor finished. (Vasari/Barocchi, 4:370; Vasari/Bull 2:148). After Andrea's death, the work went to the patrons son Bartolomeo who placed it in his house in Florence. A member of the Salviati family then obtained it and kept it in his Villa Baroncelli; Vasari states that it was Piero Salviati and the *Andrea del Sarto* exhibition catalogue that it was Jacopo. After other changes of hand, it finally entered the Medici collection in 1602. At some point, probably the end of the seventeenth century, some panels were added to the upper part of the painting to make it the same size as the Passerini. (*Andrea,* 122) On the cleaning, see Bracci, Ciatti & Tortorelli, 17-26.

61 Freedberg records some loss and abrasion in the figures of St. Nicholas and St. Thomas; Freedberg, *Andrea, cat. rais.*, 162. Commissioned by the Passerini family for a chapel in San Antonio dei Servi in Cortona by 28 April 1526; for the contract see: *Andrea*, 140 lists the painting as being restored in 1896 by Adria Tortorelli, but as Ms. Adria Tortorelli is listed as one of the restorers for the 1986 exhibition, it is more likely that this is a typing error than that she is 100 years old. The Passerini painting was placed in its intended location; it moved to the Pitti in 1687 but underwent various changes in dimension and in chromatic levels at that point to harmonise it with the earlier version; see Bracci, Ciatti & Tortorelli, 17. For the will and act of donation by Margheria Passerini and Cardinal Silvio Passerini see: Shearman, *Andrea*, Docs. 89&92 in Notarile ante-cosmiano, V. 225 (ser Christofano di Balduccio Venuti), c.135r.ff., and V225, c.147v.ff.

62 See Freedberg, *Andrea, cat. rais.*, 112.

again without the use of black. Andrea modelled these figures adeptly, each with its own combination of tonal possibilities. Colours were allowed to return their own tonal level, for example, yellow being lighter than blue, however all revealed the same level of light; this succeeded because each has the same depth of range, regardless of where on the scale the range begins or ends. As Shearman observes, the only pure hues, blue and red, appear in the Thomas figure, as opposed to desaturated secondary hues such as orange and green in the outer saints. This places palette and compositional emphasis on the central axis of the composition, the Thomas and Virgin group; the colours then fade and darken as they move away from this central axial grouping.[63] Since his last monumental altar, Sarto switched his manner of placing figures; in the *Disputa* and in the *Harpies*, Andrea placed the figures with light and then applied the colours accordingly; here, it is the hues chosen for each figure which place the form. The light remains the unifying factor but the range of each colour is consistent with its relation to all other hues.

Various artists' departures and subsequent isolated stays during the Florentine plague of 1523 make this an interesting period. Their work while no longer in the stylistic hothouse of Florence gives us an opportunity to reasses each of their own personal styles, an analysis of which will be done in the context of each artist; to summarise here, Andrea goes to Luco di Mugello, north-northeast of Florence, Pontormo south to the Certosa at Galluzzo, while Franciabigio stays in Florence. The reasons for Rosso's movements are more difficult to determine, he left Florence for Rome in the spring of 1524, almost half a year after the plague began; perhaps given his eccentric character, he did not see this as such a threat.[64] In 1523, Florence again fell victim to the plague, and Andrea "to escape it, and to do some work or other, through the agency of Antonio Brancacci, ...went to Mugello."[65] Vasari tells us nothing about what possible affect this trip had on his work or his life, other than that he was well treated. Andrea painted a panel while in Mugello, now generally known as the *Luco* or *Pitti Pietà* (1524; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti) (Fig. 76) for the nuns of San Piero a Luco, a Camaldolese order.[66]

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63 Shearman, "Developments," 209.

64 Franklin does not mention the plague as a possible reason for Rosso's departure, but links it to opportunities in patronage; see below, Chapter Seven for further disucssion; Franklin, *Rosso*, 121ff.

65 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:375-377: "*... per fuggire la peste et anco lavorare qualche cosa...*"; Vasari/Bull 2:151.

66 Restored for the 1986 show and in 1815; see *Andrea*, 129. This text also also indicates that the Santa Felicità altarpiece has its genesis here. The panel went to Paris in the same trend of restorations and transfers to canvas as the Fra Bartolommeo *Salvator Mundi* and *St. Mark* although it apparently was not itself ultimately transferred to canvas; see: Incerpi, 218-9. For a description of the damage which occurred between the painting being sent to Paris in 1799 and returned to Florence in 1815 cited in Incerpi, see: Arch. Sov. Gall. Fir., XXXX, 1816. no.

Despite his relative physical isolation, in this work Andrea showed himself well-versed in other Florentine treatments of the same subject, and in particular Fra Bartolommeo's version for San Gallo, the church in which Andrea already had three images. As evidence of this, the *Luco Pietà* marks the end of a long development, starting with Perugino's *Pitti Lamentation* and continuing through the complex of similar versions of this subject by Fra Bartolommeo, Fra Paolino and Guiliano Bugiardini, with Andrea's as the last word as it were.[67] As Serena Padovani mentions in her catalogue entry the Raphael *Borghese Entombment* and Michelangelo's complex poses also have their effects on these works as well.[68] In terms of composition in the Luco work, Sarto looked most closely at Fra Bartolommeo for the two standing saints and Christ's pose, seated on the cloth covered stone, harkens back to the original Perugino. However, Andrea enlivened St. John's pose, turning him to face St. Paul and distanced him, the Magdalene and the Virgin from Christ's body. This is particularly clear in that the Virgin no longer gazes at Christ's face, but at his hand; additionally, the Magdalene no longer touches him and apparently looks directly at the host and chalice. What this increased separation creates, together with the chalice and host placed directly below Christ, is a stronger emphasis on the body of Christ than on the separation of Mother and Son as in the earlier images.

In lighting this work, Andrea increased the directionality, range, intensity, and sharpness of the light, a system which becomes almost standard in contemporary treatments of this subject. *Chiaroscuro* here has lost its role as the creator of depth, the figures therefore seeming to be more in the foreground of the painting, or in "our" realm. He continued to use *chiaroscuro* in some areas such as the blue tunic of St. John to model forms, and to indicate the range of light which is strongest on the groundcloth, loincloth, standing left saint, the Magdalene, the arm of St. Catherine and the arm of the standing right figure; in essence these bright areas surround with light the narrow-ranged body of Christ, the spiritual and compositional centre. In his palette, Andrea paired colours with virtuosity, the only two repetitions occuring in the pink in the Magdalene and John -- which serve to anchor the composition -- , and the turquoise of John and St. Catherine, which resonate with the background. This seems again, as in the *Madonna of the Harpies*, an exercise in pairing and handling of colour; however, as Shearman asserts, in this painting it happens throughout and not just within individual figures. Much more so than Fra Bartolommeo's fully saturated

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48, Verbale 1799.c.I, Verbale 1815 c. Iv; Bibl. Uffizi, ms. 279, no. 7. For the receipt for payment, see: Shearman, *Andrea*, Doc. 78 and 100 from: A.S.F. Convento 155, No. 26 (*Debitori e Creditori B, 1502-27*). He also painted a now lost *Visitation* for the church of the same convent.

67 See Antonio Paolucci, "Le copie della Pietà di Fra Bartolommeo prima della manomissione seicentesca," in Ciatti & Padovani, 47ff and *Andrea*, 129ff.

68 *Andrea*, 129-30.

yet dimmed hues, Sarto here allowed the brightness and brilliance of the hues to come through, while still controlling the lighting masterfully. For example the choice of the unique block of turquoise in St. Catherine's dress still manages to assert its hue despite being blocked from the light by the Magdalene; equally masterful is the placement of St. Peter's golden yellow robe in the fullest lit area of the panel, while just below, St. John's chest goes almost to black as he turns away from the light. Andrea is here able to use the same sort of lighting, colour and placement techniques as used earlier, yet to do so without losing any of the beauty and aesthetic appeal of truly fully saturated hues.

In the *Pitti Pietà*, Andrea continued his subtle revolt against Leonardo and, closer to home, Fra Bartolommeo, by asserting the beauty and compatibility of colours, rather than their subjectivity to light and natural effects; in short, he began to assert idealism over naturalism. Shearman sees this "emotional detente" as symptomatic of the development of the Florentine artist in the third decade of the sixteenth-century, in which colour relaxes and becomes beautiful. Subject matter, at this point, became divorced from style.[69] The *Vienna Pietà* shared with Mannerist works an intense communication with the spectator; in the Luco di Mugello panel Sarto puts this aside to emphasise his classical ancestry and indeed the Florentine tradition of form. Andrea certainly showed an interest in idealism on an aesthetic level, however he still is involved in the recreation of the natural world. Vasari writes of Andrea's concern with the art of painting and comments frequently on how lifelike his figures were, a comment it seems he never would have made about either Rosso or Pontormo's work from this time.

Once the danger from the plague subsided, Andrea returned to Florence, presumably with other artists in late 1524. With the *Madonna del Sacco* (inscr.1525; Florence: SS. Annunziata, atrium) (Fig. 77) Andrea returned to the site of his early frescoes, SS. Annunziata, this time to the larger and more light-filled Chiostro dei Morti. Vasari writes that:

> Messer Jacopo, in releasing and absolving a woman from a vow, had laid down that she should provide for the painting of a figure of our Lady over the outside of the door of the Annunziata leading into the cloiser; and so, finding Andrea, he told him that he had the money to spend, and that although it was not much, it seemed to be right and proper that, since Andrea had won such fame from the other works he had executed in that place, he and no one else should do this as well.[70]

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69 Shearman, *Andrea*, 206.

70 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:382-3: "*Aveva messer Iacopo frate de' Servi, nell'assolvere e permutar un voto d'una donna, ordinatole ch'ella facesse fare sopra la porta del fianco della Nunziata che va nel chiosto, dalla parte di fuori, una figura d'una Nostra Donna; per che trovato Andrea, gli disse che aveva a fare spendare questi danari, e che, se bene non erano molti, gli*

The identity of the woman and the nature of her vow remain unknown to us, but the transformation of the simple requirement for a Madonna into the *Madonna del Sacco* has come down to us as one of Sarto's definitive statements in fresco, a simple study but also one in harmony and unity not only of composition, but also of colour. Andrea adapted the lunette flawlessly to its environment, continuing the real light from the cloister in the painting.[71] He carried on using a decreased range in the background figures; modelling became completely controlled and under his will. He used all techniques, colour change, tonal and colour modelling convincingly, applying the colours throughout the work to create a harmonious resonance between them. For example, the white of the Madonna's tunic with the white of the sack on which Joseph leans and equally the varying shades of lilac used in the Joseph figure and in Christ -- all of which matches the extreme balance of the figural composition.

Following this work the dating becomes complicated. Vasari's chronology is also somewhat harder to follow; his opening comments now consist of phrases such as "about the same time" and occasionally makes no comment at all about in what order a painting was done.[72] Indeed, he discusses the *Madonna del Sacco*, inscribed 1525, immediately following the Pisa *St. Agnes Polyptych*, which is dated anywhere between 1527 and 1530. Happily we have a document which dates the commission of the *Passerini Assunta* as 1526, although Sarto did not necessarily begin work immediately, and a drawing for the *Gambassi Madonna* done on the verso of a sheet of drawings for the later *Assunta* implying that they were underway at the same time. Finally both Shearman and Freedberg agree in dating the San Salvi *Last Supper* as 1526-7.[73] Therefore the ordering accepted here will be the *Last Supper*, the *Passerini Assunta*, the *Gambassi Madonna* and the *Pala Vallombrosana.*

In 1511, the Vallombrosan monks of San Salvi had commissioned Andrea to do a series of frescoes in their refectory: five *tondi* in the vault and on the wall a *Last Supper* (1526-7; Florence: San Salvi) (Fig. 78). At the time of the commission he only painted the *tondi*, and did not return to do the larger fresco until much later.[74] Vasari describes this work as "the most smooth, the most vivacious in colouring and

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pareva ben fatto, avendogli tanto nome acquistato le altre opere fatte in quel luogo, che egli e non altri facesse anco questa." Vasari/Bull, 2:157.

71 Shearman, "Developments," 221.

72 See also Freedberg, *Andrea*, *cat. rais.*, 160 on this problem.

73 See Shearman, *Assumption* article for a full discussion of the dating of this pair of altarpieces. Freedberg dates the *Passerini Assunta* as 1527-9; referring to stylistic bonds between this and the *Gambassi Madonna* which will be discussed with the later work, this later dating seems more acceptable; Freedberg, *Andrea*, *cat. rais.*, 162ff.

74 For the commission and payments, see Shearman, *Andrea*, doc. 93 (commission) from: A.S.F. Convento 88, No.3, c.7r and docs. 94-99 from same volume.

drawing that he ever did."[75] This unity indeed overwhelms the viewer upon entering the refectory, now a museum. The light in the painting, perfectly consistent with the natural lighting flowing in from windows high up and to the right, selects the lower figures, while shrouding to some extent the two servants in the loggia above, who are blocked from the light by the pilasters between which they stand. These latter two figures, as logical lighting would demand, have reduced highlights where they are shaded, yet the right arm of the right-hand figure shows a touch of whitening where his arm protrudes from behind the pillar. Equally, the feet below the table are barely discernible, and the light gradually emerges and brightens along the floor to the front edge of the painting. The modelling at this point has indeed become almost stunning. Andrea applied pure hues, one over the other, and the hatching marks where he scratches away the overlying pigment to reveal the one below, create a dramatic *cangiante* sense of light and shadow. He modelled each figure in strong relief, using a comparatively narrow palette, contrasting *cangiante* with colour modelling consistently across the same figure; for example, at the extreme right and left, each figure has a colour-modelled tunic and lower drape, while the dramatically *cangiante* red to yellow and green to pink shoulder draperies anchor and call attention to this area of the composition. The nature of the modelling, which almost approximates marble or some other hard surface, makes a sharp contrast with the softness and *sfumato* of earlier panel works such as the *Madonna of the Harpies*, but does seem in line with later images such as the *Assunte*. Compare for example the drapery which falls over the back of the extreme right Disciple in the San Salvi fresco with the similar pink drapery in the foreground of the *Panciatichi Assunta*. Colours such as lilac, red and yellow appear at some points as local colour highlighted with white, and at other points as either a highlight or shadow to a different local hue. This creates a unity through repetition, and yet the deep *rilievo* and strong, powerful folds of drapery create monumental, weighty figures which hardly seem under the control of any atmospheric system; the air here seems crystal clear and the forms move in and out of depth -- and therefore in and out of the light -- yet their range remains rational under this system. However, despite this extreme logic, Andrea also revealed his growing interest in the "eccentricities" of colour change. Here, although dramatic, the colours remain balanced, keeping a similar range of hue consistent through decreased tonality; soon however, in the late works such as the *Gambassi Madonna*, Andrea seemed to fail to control this, pushing colours too far to white or to a dark shadow, thereby losing their overriding harmony. This may be a result of the medium, (as his most impressive works do tend to be in fresco), but perhaps it also betrays an overly

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75 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:385: "... *è certamente la più facile, la più vivace di colorito e di disegno che facesse già mai...*"; Vasari/Bull, 2:159.

active interest in the behaviour of colour above all else.

Freedberg's comparison of this work with Michelangelo certainly seems appropriate and it takes little effort to draw the connection between the pairings of strong, pure hues applied as marble-like drapery on monumental figures of these figures with similar qualities in the earlier Prophets and Sibyls of the Sistine Ceiling, Ezekiel being a good example. Nowhere in his work in fresco did Sarto move towards the kind of unstable *cangiante* of Jonah; it seemed only an interest for early panel work. In his summation of Andrea's career, Vasari mentions a trip to Rome, but sadly gives no date or even hint at what point in his life this trip occurred.[76] Were this trip to become a firm fact we could attribute to it the change in style. This type of figure is hardly new for Andrea, nor is the consistency of lighting and colouration; however the gravity, clarity and action of the figures seems to be a closer parallel then either the *Disputa* or the *Tribute to Caesar*. However, again this is not the place for a lengthy and wide ranging comparison.

In contrast to his previous painting of this subject, the *Passerini Assunta* which compositionally is not unlike its predecessor, shows a marked change in attitude towards content, colour, and style. Freedberg terms it "a ponderous machine," which makes classical form support deficiency in content. He feels the abstraction in colour is the result of two causes: first, the separation of colour into fields; presumably they again become self-contained rather than ranging throughout the panel. And second, that Andrea no longer used light to qualify colours, thereby losing the logical organisation with and through light which his paintings up until now have all shared.[77] Andrea here increased the light on an overall level, by decreasing the range throughout and increasing the level of light in the background. The ever present *chiaroscuro* and *sfumato* of the first *Assunta* have almost vanished, leaving figures that have more in common in their harshness of modelling with Michelangelo and Rosso than with Fra Bartolommeo or Leonardo. The sense here is that forms within themselves turn away from the light and not, as previously, that the light dissipates around them. It is now easy to discern the colours in the back of the composition, and their repetition in the front of the pictorial space serves to flatten the depth of the work. The depth of *rilievo* remains similar to the *Panchiatichi Assunta*, however the hues themselves have intensified. Colours are laid down here in blocks, isolated, which is increased by the fact that there is very little repetition in the composition. This lack of repetition in turn decreases the feeling of harmony and unity. Shearman equates these changes with a move towards *grazia* and *maniera* in style and credits this overall change with an increased eccentricity in colour,

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76 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:394; Vasari/Bull, 2:165.

77 Freedberg, *Andrea, text*, 83.

modelling, and the absence of a concern with subject matter.[78]

It is in the *Gambassi Madonna* (c. 1525-8; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti) (Fig. 79) that these developments or changes in technique and style become more clear and understandable.[79] To some extent it should be read as an overcleaned painting although not in all areas. The Madonna's knee is the clearest example of overly zealous cleaning, but other areas do not seem similarly stripped.[80] Andrea's friend Becuccio Bicchieraio originally commissioned the work for the high altar of Santa Maria a Chianni in Gambassi. It seems that compositionally this work harks back to the *Pala del Gran Consiglio*, in which the Madonna is placed quite high in the composition; more recently, it relates to similar compositional interests in Pontormo's San Michele Visdomini altarpiece and Andrea's own now lost *Madonna di San Ambrogio*.[81] In terms of colour, a link should be drawn with the Frate's *Madonna della Misericordia* in the overall greying of the tonalities and hues, and particularly in the sense of drama and vision given by atmospheric concerns. This seems to be a period of crisis in style for many Florentine artists; therefore, that Sarto should look back to a time of crisis in the Frate's own style is not surprising.

Light, previously the organiser and creator of harmony, now has become inconsistent. The knee of the Madonna, which spatially and logically could hardly protrude beyond the two foreground figures, and equally cannot be considered an iconographic focal point, receives the highest level of highlight, although this may be the result of overcleaning. The robes of St. Sebastian, which appear to be of a local hue of similar value, have their highest saturation in the highlight, while that of the

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78 Shearman, "Assumption": 134.

79 Restored for the 1986 exhibition. A considerable discrepancy exists between the dates given by Shearman and Freedberg. Freedberg, feels colour ties it to the crisis between the mid and late twenties, calling the use of hues here "high-keyed, " "blue shadowed," "melancholic," and "hard surfaced" and gives a date of 1527-8; Shearman found a study for one of the saints in this work on the *verso* of a drawing for the *Passerini Assunta*, indicating that they were in progress at the same time; because of the commission document dated 1526 and because he finds the *Gambassi* work stylistically inseparable from the *Madonna del Sacco* and *Passerini Assunta*, he dates this work as c. 1525-6. The similarity with the *Madonna del Sacco* seems not nearly so strong as the similarity with the direction in which Andrea's work took after the *Passerini Assunta* and towards the *Pala di Poppi* and Vallombrosa altarpiece of 1529-40 and 1528 respectively. In addition, the commission document merely states that the work was commissioned in 1526, and as seen with the *Last Supper*, this certainly cannot give a specific date for the execution of a work. For these reasons, I find Freedberg's dating of 1527-8, placing the *Gambassi Madonna* after the *Passerini Assunta* and before the *Pala di Poppi*, the more acceptable of the two. Commissioned by Andrea's friend Becuccio Bicchieraio da Gambassi for the Benedictine convent of Ss. Lorenzo e Onofrio in Gambassi, south southwest of Florence: see *Andrea*, 134.

80 For notes on condition, see Shearman, *Andrea*, 267.

81 For the link with Fra Bartolommeo, see Freedberg, *Andrea, text*, 82ff. For the San Ambrogio, see John Shearman, "A lost Altar-piece by Andrea del Sarto: 'The Madonna of S. Ambrogio'," *Burlington Magazine* 103 (1961): 225ff.

Madonna is in the shadows. Nearly everything here is formed through colour modelling. However Andrea reminds us in the grey dress of the Magdalene that he is still capable of tonal modelling. Andrea used the palette in this work to assert the cold beauty and variety of colour above all else. There is little concern with colour organization or composition, merely small areas of conscious pairing of colours and modelling such in the female saint; however her drapery seems more chalky and cold in comparison with the strong hues of the Madonna in the *Harpies* or the similarly placed figure in the *Disputa*. In terms of preceding altarpieces, he has lost the rationality of the first *Assunta* and the vibrance of the second.

Unfortunately, Vasari makes no qualitative comments about this work, as it would be helpful to see this new and extreme system of colour through the eyes of a near contemporary. Freedberg finds this another work of crisis, and comments on the loss of energy in colour, making it appear pallid, reinforcing the previously cited development towards the assertion of form and colour over mind, or content. The connection here between Pontormo's work at Santa Felicità in terms of light, bleached tones and "bloodlessness" stops short of the vitality and abstractness present in the younger man's work.[82] More positively, Shearman discusses the increase in the colour of the atmosphere itself, in the mosaic-like background, which heightens the "chromatic effect" of the work; Andrea reversed his previous concerns to now yield stable forms against a palpitating atmosphere.[83] These concerns, primarily of the assertion of colour -- and therefore implicitly material over form, subject, and space -- seem as close as Andrea comes to his pupils Vasari and Francesco Salviati. It seems here that Andrea has somehow overshot his goals embodied in the paintings of a few years previously.[84]

In the *Pala Vallombrosana* (inscr. 1528; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi) (Fig. 80) Sarto again expresses an interest in unity of colour. The Chiesa del Romitorio delle Celle in Vallombrosa almost due east from Florence, commissioned the panels during the time in which Giovanni Maria Canigiani was head of the order.[85] The drapery of the figures here is certainly reminiscent of the *Assunte* in the slab of red to yellow *cangiante* over St. Michael's shoulder and the choice of clearly represented orphrey in San Bernardo degli Uberti. Sarto resolved the need to harmonise a relatively drab habit, in this case worn by San Giovanni Gualberto, with St. John the Baptist's red by placing the two in the background and contrasting them with the more complex and vivid depictions of the other two saints. Tonally, all is on the same level

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82 Freedberg, *Andrea, text*, 83.

83 Shearman, "Developments," 216.

84 The unfortunate absence here of the *Quattro Santi/Vallombrosan* altar, and the *St. Agnes Altar* in Pisa is due to unavailability of access for viewing.

85 See *Andrea*, 144ff.

with the exception of St. Michael's yellow drape, which is the one object which would receive direct and unblocked light from the windows on either side.[86] In terms of modelling, Andrea resorted to many options, the most dramatic of which are contained in St. Michael's clothing; the long tunic seems to have been modelled with lake and a turquoise mixture of various pigments but the characteristic fading of the lake has rendered it somewhat odd in appearance. The original effect together with the drape over the shoulder, painted in simple broad areas of colour, must have been quite dramatic indeed. Like the St. Francis in the *Madonna of the Harpies*, San Giovanni Gualberto, founder of the Vallombrosan order, wears brown, in this case created by Andrea with red and black in shadows and a bit of green mixed in throughout giving the same indefiniteness of colour as the earlier Franciscan habit. Sarto created Bishop San Bernardo degli Uberti's dark green cope by scumbling together yellow and blue on the surface of the panel; there is no unity of hue on the brush, but rather a mixing of two perhaps directly from the palette. This is also the only area in which Andrea was willing to use black, thereby giving credence to the need for the dark green drape to become even darker in shadow. Overall Andrea created contrast between form on the left by juxtapositions of hue and on the right of light and dark.

What Vasari does not convey is Andrea's extreme importance for the advancement of colour at this time. Sarto's early experiments with Leonardo's obscuring of colour were ultimately rejected; it was he, rather than Fra Bartolommeo, who brought back Ghirlandaiesque colour in works such as the Luco *Pietà* and the Borgherini scenes as a later interest. The impact of this change wrought by Andrea opens the way for new colour use in his successors. The visual dialogue between him and his pupils on this subject of the applications of fully saturated colours is something that will be fleshed out in later chapters. Andrea brought colour in all its aspects, as hue, pigment, creator of form, compositional organiser, substance of pictorial atmosphere, and creator of spatial depth, into the mainstay of painterly issues, continually placing colour in the forefront of his concerns in a way which, Fra Bartolommeo, for whom composition remains paramount, did not do. This in turn allowed colour to become a major tool of development for the later generation, in their active use of pigments and the command of technique they surely must have learned from their master. However, it is here that master and pupil diverge, for while Andrea was for the most part a subtle artist, working stylistically with ideas such as harmony, balance, union and grace, while the younger artists certainly would be credited with more drama, emotion and contrast. Andrea thereby establishes a

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86 For a reconstruction and drawing of the original location of the altarpiece, see *Andrea*, 146-7.

dialogue regarding colour with his colleagues which will be expanded upon through examining their own works in greater depth.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PONTORMO: 1513-1524

Among the various styles of Andrea del Sarto, Michelangelo, Dürer and others, Jacopo Pontormo appears as a sort of conduit, an artist who absorbs these other styles and yet manages to remain completely singular. His readily identifiable style, due particularly to his unique colour use, still manages to defy categorisation within the history of sixteenth century art; debate continues to rage as to whether or not Pontormo, together with his errant colleague Rosso Fiorentino, should be classed among the Mannerists. The purpose here is not to answer this question specifically, but rather to assess Pontormo's place and role in the exploration of colour uses during this period. By doing this, and by thereby reaching a greater understanding of Pontormo's work in colour, we can bring this understanding to bear in subsequent discussions of his relationship to Mannerist style.

Before beginning with the works, and without getting mired in the debates regarding Mannerism, a brief look should be taken at Pontormo's character as we have come to know him, as a great deal of description and quite a distinct if not somewhat stereotyped version of him have come down to us. Most of our information comes from Giorgio Vasari -- who came into contact with Pontormo through the circle surrounding Michelangelo -- appeared in Pontormo's *bottega* in the second half of the 1520s along with Foschi, Jacopino, Jacone and Salviati. While many of his anecdotes regarding Pontormo should on some level be accepted as true given his personal knowledge of Jacopo, Vasari's own agenda must always be kept in mind. As will be explored in the section on the Certosa frescoes, Vasari was keen to develop an idea of artists as solitary geniuses. The impression of Pontormo as a man who, while working sometimes "... began to think so deeply about what he wanted to do, that he would leave with out having done anything else all day except stand in deep thought..." remains with us.[1] While certainly this was one of Pontormo's traits, Vasari's stories should not necessarily always be taken literally. For example, his tale of Michelangelo's solitude on the Sistine scaffolding has been proved at least inaccurate; therefore caution should also be taken with similar stories about Pontormo.

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1 Vasari/Bull, 2:272; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:334: "*... si mise così profondamente a pensare quello che volesse fare, che se ne partì senz'avere fatto altro in tutto quel giorno che stare in pensiero...*"

We must also keep in mind the longevity of Pontormo's life when dealing with his work. Like Michelangelo, Pontormo lived to quite an advanced age for his time, dying at sixty-two. During his lifetime he saw a succession of changes in the political rule of Florence, including periods of both Republican and Medicean control. He lived through the turbulent late 1520s, including the sack of Rome and the siege of Florence, although we have no specific information as to his involvement or actions during this tumultuous event. In terms of artistic influence he grew up under the sway of Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael and Fra Bartolommeo and ultimately outlived them all, although Michelangelo by only little more than a year. Thus, whereas Fra Bartolommeo can be readily identified with a particular period in Florentine history, the same cannot be said of Pontormo.

Pontormo also has come down to us as one of the crucial protagonists in the development of colour during the early and mid-sixteenth century. His unique and stunning colour style in the Santa Felicità altarpiece remains one of the most well known and commented upon passages of colour from the whole period. Furthermore, the fact that he chose to translate Dürer woodcut compositions into colour, and more importantly was chosen to transform Michelangelo cartoons into painted panels, show his importance for and interest in colour during this crucial period in its development during the Renaissance. It is for all of these reasons that Pontormo receives the level of attention that he does in the subsequent chapters.

Early Career

We are fortunate in the wealth of information which has survived regarding the early career of Jacopo Pontormo. Vasari knew Pontormo and many of his colleagues well, and his biography contains a great deal of more reasonably reliable information. While we do not know exactly when Pontormo was with each of his masters, Vasari gives us a list of them, providing some idea as to the gist of his early training. Additionally, some documents concerning his earliest works, particularly those in SS. Annunziata and for the various festivals in Florence early in the second decade of the *cinquecento* have been thoroughly examined and published, though it is still true that no commission documents for any Pontormo works have been found. Unfortunately, as regards colour, the earliest works which have survived -- the decorations for the carts in the February 1513 festival -- are in *chiaroscuro*, so his colour style at the outset of his career cannot be known.

As mentioned, most of our early information on Pontormo comes to us from Vasari's biography; as Vasari studied with Pontormo and knew him personally his factual information in this instance can be considered more reliable than in some other

cases. He first tells us of Pontormo's father, Bartolommeo di Jacopo di Martino, a Florentine of the Carrucci family, who was "said to be a disciple of Domenico Ghirlandaio." Bartolommeo worked in the Valdarno and then moved to Pontorme where he married and where his son Jacopo was born.[2] Bartolommeo died when Jacopo was only four years old, his wife following him to the grave only two years after that; as such, it would be foolish to expect that any of Bartolommeo's experiences with Ghirlandaio could have filtered through to his young son, tempting thought that thought may be. Jacopo's own artistic career began when, through the agency of his grandmother, he came to Florence to live in the Via de' Servi. Shortly after, Pontormo was placed with Leonardo, most likely in 1507.[3] As Leonardo left Florence in spring or summer 1508, Pontormo cannot have been with him long.[4] There is no evidence as to the nature of Leonardo's studio during this time, so it is unclear what concrete if any evidence we might ever find as to Pontormo's involvement in the studio. Departing from Leonardo's company, Pontormo went to study with Piero di Cosimo, where he probably stayed until 1509. At this point the young man joined Mariotto Albertinelli, probably at the via Gualfonda workshop. It is this apprenticeship that is generally considered that which had the greatest influence on Pontormo.[5] It was also with Albertinelli that Pontormo would have been exposed, second hand, to the highly influential style of Fra Bartolommeo; it is likely that during Pontormo's time with Albertinelli, Franciabigio was there as well, since both young artists are credited with participation in the Certosa *Crucifixion* project. By this time, Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael had all left Florence, followed by Fra Bartolommeo, who in 1508 went on his important visit to Venice. Andrea's career was only just beginning, and therefore Albertinelli, at this stage, would have been one of the most influential painters in Florence. Shearman acknowledged Albertinelli's role for Pontormo as a link to the fifteenth century, and certainly some of Albertinelli's

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2 Vasari/Bull, 2:235; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:307: "*... si dice che fu discepolo di Domenico Ghirlandaio*". On the family home in Pontorme, see: *Il Pontormo a Empoli*, ex. cat. (Venice: Marsilio, 1994).

3 Vasari/Bull, 2:236; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:307. On the placement with Leonardo, see Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 1:17. Frederick Mortimer Clapp, *Jacopo Carucci da Pontormo: His Life and Work* (London: Yale University Press, 1916), 267ff discusses the apprenticeships in great detail.

4 Kemp, *Marvellous*, 218.

5 On the via Gualfonda workshop under Albertinelli's direction see: Borgo, "Works," 14-15; Borgo states that Pontormo must have been there from c. 1506-10. Cox-Rearick rightly moves the starting date back to c. 1508 or 1509, based on the time Pontormo must have been with Leonardo; Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 22-3 (page numbers in this volume refer to volume 1 - text; if citation are given from volume 2 -- plates -- this will be noted in the footnote). See also Freedberg, *Italy*, 180. Beck, "Albertinelli": 623-4 refutes a document cited by Clapp and establishes the age at which Pontormo could have entered Albertinelli's workshop but does not give any further information.

paintings from around the time of Pontormo's apprenticeship would affirm this.[6] For example, the *Visitation* (inscr. 1503; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi) (Fig. 35) shows striking examples of colour change at a time when this would have been seen as a reaction against Leonardo.[7] The *Crucifixion* fresco done for the Certosa and still in the chapter house there, (inscr. September 1505; Galluzzo: Certosa di Val d'Ema) (Fig. 36) shows an equal level of fully saturated colour and hue change which seem much more influential on the young Pontormo than any of the techniques to which he would have been exposed to under Leonardo. It is likely that Albertinelli would have also been working on the large *Annunciation with God the Father* (inscr. 1510; Florence: Accademia) for the Canonica of Santa Maria del Fiore at the time Pontormo began with him; the combination of the dark, *chiaroscuro*-based colour style in this work with the much brighter more fully saturated type in the earlier works would have provided Pontormo with a rich selection in terms of influence. In 1512, Albertinelli closed his workshop and it is probable that Pontormo then went to work with Andrea del Sarto as an assistant. It is also during this time that we begin to have records of Pontormo's work.

The first knowledge we have of any painting by Pontormo is from a payment made to him on 31 January 1513, to paint candlesticks, when he would have been eighteen years of age.[8] One month after this, both Giuliano and Lorenzo de Medici commissioned him to paint cart decorations for the February, 1513 carnivals, which were used by the Medici in part to bolster their public image after their somewhat unpopular reinstatement to power in 16 November 1512. It is important that Pontormo not only received this commission at the age of nineteen, having done no public work other than the now lost predella for Andrea's *San Gallo Annunciation*, but also that he painted five of the seven scenes on Lorenzo's *Broncone* floats and all of those on Giuliano's *Diamante* company floats.[9] And nine months following -- payments run from 26 November 1513 to 6 June 1514 -- a lesser artist called in Pontormo to execute two figures of Faith and Charity surrounding a coat of arms for the soon-to-be Leo X on the facade of SS. Annunziata, all part of the triumphal return

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6 Shearman, "Developments," 116, n.18. He also notes (p. 110) that Beccafumi may have been in the San Marco studio at the same time as Jacopo.

7 Shearman, "Developments," 116 sees this as the first reaction against Leonardo and comments on the loss of "optical rationalisation" inherent in his scheme. See Borgo, "Works," 23 for the dating and analysis of this work as "Peruginesque" and cat. I/8, 276ff.

8 John Shearman, "Rosso, Pontormo, Bandinelli and Others at SS. Annunziata," *Burlington Magazine* 102 (1960): 154.

9 John Shearman, "Pontormo and Andrea del Sarto, 1513," *Burlington Magazine* 104 (1962): 478-83. and Luciano Berti, "Addenda al Pontormo del Carnevale 1513," in *Scritti di Storia dell'Arte in Onore di Ugo Procacci*, 2 vols. (Milan: Electa, 1977), 2:340ff.

of Leo X to Florence.[10] At this time Pontormo also worked with Ridolfo Ghirlandaio on the Sala del Papa in the convent of Santa Maria Novella.[11] Pontormo also painted decorations for the Carro della Moneta for the annual St. John the Baptist celebration procession, doing scenes of the *Visitation*, the *Baptism*, *St. John the Baptist*, *St. Matthew*, *St. Zenobius*, and *Putti* (c. 1514; Florence: Museo Bardini).[12] The composition of the first of these paintings almost exactly reproduces Albertinelli's of the same subject in the Uffizi.[13] Of the arms, Vasari writes that "when Michelangelo Buonarroti one day saw this work, and reflected that a young man of nineteen had done it, he said: 'This young man will be such, from what one can see, that if he lives and perseveres, he will exalt painting to the very heavens.'"[14] This last work features in Vasari's tale, not only as the centre of a narrative establishing Pontormo's secretive and modest nature regarding his own work but also to tell of a falling out between Pontormo and Andrea, causing the apprentice to leave his master's shop:

> ...one day (Pontormo) took his master Andrea del Sarto to see [the figures]. And having looked at them with absolute wonder and amazement, Andrea praised them to the skies; but then, as was said, whether through envy or for some other reason, he never looked kindly on Jacopo, rather when Jacopo went sometimes to his workshop, either it was not opened for him, or he was jeered at by the apprentices, to such effect that he took himself off altogether.[15]

It seems that Pontormo, having received quite early a great deal of recognition and praise, then left Andrea's shop to set up on his own in June 1514 at the age of 20.

It is around this time -- 1514 -- that Pontormo received this commission for the *Madonna and Child with Saints* for the church of San Ruffillo del Vescovo in the Piazza dell'Olio (c. 1514; Florence: SS. Annunziata, Cappella di San Luca) (Fig. 81). A lunette of *God the Father and Angels* originally surmounted the fresco, but when the altarpiece was moved to its present location this part was destroyed.[16] At this

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10 Shearman, "Annunziata": 154; Rosanna Caterina Proto Pisani, "Le Opere: L'Arme di Leone X," in *Empoli*, 35ff and 38ff and Ilaria Ciseri, *L'Ingresso Trionfale de Leone X in Firenze nel 1515* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1990).

11 See Ciseri, 41 in which she discusses the involvement of three major studios in the decorations for Leo: Ghirlandaio's with the Ridolfo, Feltrini Poggini and Granacci; Andrea's with Rosso and Pontormo; and Bandinelli, Jacopo Sansovino with Antonio and Bastiano da Sangallo as well.

12 For colour illustrations of the first three, see *Empoli*, cat. 9, 97ff.

13 For other influences see ibid., 99.

14 Vasari/Bull, 2:239; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:310: "*Questo giovane sarà anco tale, per quanto si vede, che, se vive e seguita, porrà quest'arte in cielo.*"

15 Vasari/Bull, 2:238; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:309: "*... e ciò fatto, menò un giorno Andrea del Sarto suo maestro a vederli; il quale Andrea vedutigli con infinita maraviglia e stupore, gli lodò infinitamente; ma poi, come si è detto, che se ne fusse o l'invidia o altra cagione, non vide mai più Iacopo con buon viso; anzi andando alcuna volta Iacopo a bottega di lui, o non gl'era aperto o era uccellato dai garzoni, di maniera che egli si ritirò affatto ...*"

16 Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 102 and *Empoli*, cat. 11, 102.

point in his career, presumably the influences of both Fra Bartolommeo and Albertinelli, and especially Andrea were still strong on Pontormo. Indeed, both his palette and modelling technique owe much to Andrea's fresco work at SS. Annunziata. although we must keep the somwhat damaged condition in mind when assessing the modelling; the red to yellow of St. Lucy's dress and lilac to cream of St. Alexius both predominate also in the foreground figures of Andrea's work in the atrium at SS. Annunziata, as does the narrow range in the palette.[17] What Pontormo lacked, or perhaps chose to avoid at this point was both Andrea and Fra Bartolommeo's blended modelling; additionally Pontormo used more fully saturated hues than Andrea's. Pontormo modelled the forms through saturation and hue change and showed very little grasp of any atmospheric or directional lighting, other than the shadow cast by St. Zachary's body onto the book he holds. He used repetition, particularly of red and the maroon/lilac hue in order to organise the painting, again a principle drawn from Andrea's fresco style of this time, but translated from a narrative arrangement to a static altarpiece.

At about this same time, Pontormo received the commission for his contribution of the *Visitation* (1514-16; Florence: Santissima Annunziata) (Fig. 82) to one of the major projects underway in Florence: the decorations of the atrium of Santissima Annunziata. Vasari tells that Pontormo was commissioned to finish the work left unfinished [*imperfette*] by Andrea as a result of the latter's trip to France; however, since Pontormo was not paid well, he did not finish the work and instead worked on some other oil paintings (none of which survive). Upon seeing these oils the friar "resolved that at all costs he would have Jacopo finish the work in the cloister..."[18] Pontormo received his first payment for the Visitation scene in the half of the cloister devoted to the Life of the Virgin in December, 1514, completing the fresco some two years later.[19] At approximately this same time, Andrea, Rosso and Pontormo were all working in the atrium; Andrea and Rosso would have been just finishing their work there, while Pontormo was only beginning his.[20] It seems a good indication of Rosso and Pontormo's quick rise to fame that only a year or so after

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17 For the identifcation of the male kneeling saint as St. Alexius rather than St. Zachary, see: David Franklin, "Empoli and Volterra: Pontormo and Rosso," ex. rev., *Burlington Magazine* 138 (1995): 48.

18 Vasari/Bull, 2:245; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:314: "... *pensò di fargli finire a ogni modo l'opera del detto cortile de' Servi ...*"

19 Shearman, "Annunziata": 154; for this work he received 93 lire, 20 soldi and it is important to note, as does Shearman, that Andrea received a similar amount for the *Nativity of the Virgin*, while Rosso received less for his *Assunta* and Franciabigio substantially less for the *Sposalizio*; at this time, Pontormo had had more public exposure than Rosso.

20 Shearman, "Annunziata": 153-4; we do not know the appearance of the Rosso *Assunta* at that time, as it was subsequently repainted by him in 1517 and this is the version which we now know.

leaving Andrea's shop, both were hired as independent artists to execute works of the same scale and importance as their recent master.[21] Stylistically, the *Visitation* has generally been considered Pontormo's emphatic statement of classical balance and harmony-- similar to the apsidal setting and the semicircular composition seen in works by Fra Bartolommeo. In terms of colour, Pontormo was indebted to Andrea's technique in the *Birth of the Virgin*, not only through the similarity in palette, but also in the way in which Andrea used individual hues through his fresco, in some situations as object colour and others as shadow in a *cangiante* drapery: for example, red appears as a drapery colour throughout the work, but also as a shadow in the Virgin's headdress. Furthermore, the same lilac to creme *cangiante* Pontormo used in the tunics of the two centre left figures as well as the drapery of the figure standing to the far right, was used extensively as a modelling technique by Andrea in the atrium.

In his own fresco Pontormo modelled the figures according to a light flow from the left; this represents a compromise, as the actual light in the cloister comes mainly from the atrium opening above, as well as from the door to the right. Perhaps due to the fact that at this time strongly directional light was apparently difficult to portray in fresco, the direction is only subtly noticeable, and moreso in the shadows in the apse rather than on actual figures. The overall lighting system gives a sense of coherence, although the figures in the background seem overly dark; Vasari comments on this "harmonious colouring, that is a marvellous thing", although the possibility that theis work had darkened thereby become more unified by the time Vasari was writing must be kept in mind.[22] Pontormo placed the hands of the two protagonists in front of the darkest area in the painting, thereby setting them off quite well despite the fact that they logically must be blocked from the light by Elizabeth's body.

In terms of modelling, Pontormo again looked to Andrea's methods. Moreso than is usual in fresco, the detail of the modelling is lost as figures move into the depth of the painting. In order to create form, he used both the inherent tonal level of hues in his arrangement, as well as lightening the hues with the addition of white while not using white as a hue. As an example of the former, he painted the drapery and tunic of the far right standing figure -- one of the closest to the picture plane -- in white and lilac to creme; for the latter, the drapery of the woman seated on the steps has a greater degree of white added to the local colour to create highlight. There is no modelling system used other than colour modelling, and that kept within a fairly narrow or low-level range, though still not as low as Andrea's. Pontormo used

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21 For problems with using the surviving payments as chronological indicators, see Franklin, *Rosso*, 18.

22 Vasari/Bull, 2:246; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:314: "*...unione di colorito, che è cosa meravigliosa.*"

cangiante for many of the draperies, perhaps the most prevalent instances being in the lilac to butter yellow in the woman on the steps, the standing woman directly behind her, the woman holding the child, and the standing figure at the far right. In all of these he used the same hues for the *cangiante* but varied the point of change between the two hues according to the figure's position in depth and how well-lit the figure appeared. The drape of the far right figure illustrates this quite well, as his left leg, which receives the direct rays of light only bears slight hints of lilac, whereas the bunch of drapery which falls from his hand and is shaded by both his body and book is done in three shades of lilac. Pontormo used *cangiante* as an alternative way of modelling -- adding colour to shadows rather than black -- much the same way that other artists would use black. The point in the colour change where the two hues are intermingled becomes the mid-saturation of Cenninian modelling, yet Pontormo retained the privilege of using each hue in its own right as the conditions demand. Form was created with a network of small, angular brush strokes, visible with the naked eye in the knee of the woman on the steps; the result differs greatly from Andrea's smoothly blended technique in the *Birth of the Virgin* but is very similar to Pontormo's own earlier work for San Ruffillo, and also Rosso's work, especially in the later figures in the Volterra *Deposition*.

Pontormo placed his palette on a brighter, more saturated level than Andrea's. However at one point or another they both show an interest in setting together many individual blocks of saturated hues for an obvious effect of beauty and display. In Pontormo's work, this concern is shown by Elizabeth's lilac and green dress topped by the white shawl that lies against the yellow dress, as well as the subtly done red and green cloth held above the head of the woman standing to the left. In Andrea, we see the strongest example three years later in the sleeve of the Virgin in the *Madonna of the Harpies*; this later appearance in Andrea's work leads one to believe it was an interest first held by Pontormo. The younger artist set off the other main character in the scene -- the Virgin -- with more simple, solid blocks of colour; her figure would certainly be much more assertive were the blue pigment of her drapery in its original condition, as it is the only blue in the entire painting.[23] Pontormo used these two varied techniques -- simplicity and complexity of palette -- to draw attention to and distinguish between the two main characters. He organised the rest of the work around a framework of red, maroon/lilac and yellow, throughout which play notes of green and white which work together to lead towards the main characters. It is these latter two hues which move us in and out of depth as they tend to be repeated from foreground to background alternately and in opposition to one another as we read the

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23 The relatively pale quality of the blue paint leads me to believe it is azzurite rather than lapis lazuli, although this cannot be decisively concluded without technical examination.

composition from side to side; they only appear together in Elizabeth's drapery. None of this is in and of itself extraordinary; Pontormo shows an inventiveness characteristic of his talent, but a willingness to remain within the stylistic constraints of his city's current style which is characteristic of his age.

Around the same time as his work at the Annunziata, Pontormo assisted in the decorations of the triumphal entry of the Medici Pope Leo X.[24] Although the return of the Pope took place on 30 November 1515, preparations began much earlier. Three main studios received commissions: Ridolfo Ghirlandaio's studio, which included Feltrini, Poggini and Granacci; the group associated with Andrea del Sarto, including most importantly Rosso and Pontormo; and Bandinelli and Jacopo Sansovino's with Antonio and Bastiano da Sangallo.[25] Pontormo participated in the decoration of an arch in the via del Proconsolo with Granacci, Baccio da Montelupo and Aristotile da Sangallo.[26] More importantly, Ridolfo Ghirlandaio called him in to assist him and Andrea Feltrini in finishing the Sala del Papa or Cappella del Papa in the convent of Santa Maria Novella. Upon entering the chapel we see a scene of the *Coronation of the Virgin*, by Ridolfo, and on the entrance wall behind, Pontormo's *Saint Veronica with the Veil* (c. 1515; Florence: Santa Maria Novella) (Fig. 83). In terms of the pose and design of figures, Pontormo owed particular debt to Raphael, Andrea, and Michelangelo at the Sistine.[27] For such vibrancy and saturation of colour we must look outside Florence, and especially to the Sistine chapel, before we find anything equal in mural painting; within Florence, we must return to the Ghirlandaio workshop to find anything similar in fresco. Costamagna alludes to Berti's original idea of a possible trip to Rome with Andrea at the time of the *Journey of the Magi*, and this would certainly justify the change in saturation level at this time.[28] The strongly hatched brushwork which creates the red/orange/yellow *cangiante* drapery reveals a similarity with Rosso's style at this time -- for example the similar technique seen at the Annunziata -- and also to the haste with which the work had to be done.

The temperance showed by Pontormo in some areas of the *Visitation* became a central goal in his next main work, and the first large-scale statement we have from him on panel, the Visdomini Altarpiece (c. 1518; Florence: San Michele Visdomini) (Fig. 84); Vasari praises this work as "the finest panel picture this most rare painter

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24 On the *entrata* see: John Shearman, John, "The Florentine Entrata of Leo X, 1515," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 38 (1975): 136-54 and more recently: Ciseri.

25 Ciseri, 41.

26 Ibid., 101-2.

27 Costamagna, *Pontormo*, 116.

28 Costamagna, *Pontormo*, 116 originally mentioned in Luciano Berti, "Pre gli inizi del Rosso Fiorentino," *Bollettino d'Arte* 68 (1983): 45-60.

ever did."[29] Francesco di Giovanni di Antonio Pucci originally intended his altarpiece for a burial chapel in SS. Annunziata but by 9th June 1518 the location had been changed to the nearby San Michele Visdomini in the Via dei' Servi; neither Pontormo nor the altarpiece are referred to in any of the surviving documents, but Franklin states it is unlikely that it was ordered before the summer of 1518.[30] The altarpiece still hangs in its original location on the second altar to the right in the church. Interestingly, all the other altarpieces in the church are arch-shaped, while in Pontormo's rectangular work, the Madonna appears in an arch-shaped apse reminiscent of some of Fra Bartolommeo's architectural arrangements for *Sacra Conversazioni*. Both the original projected SS. Annunziata location and the Visdomini chapel bore dedications to St. Joseph.

Some questions remain as to the condition and even the support of the painting; it has traditionally been listed as executed in oil on prepared paper which was then glued on panel. Franklin states that to the naked eye the painting appears to be "a normal panel painting", and suggests that conservation would solve this problem. Conservation work would also clarify queries as to the true level of light and saturation in the painting. The treatment of light and therefore colour in this painting is a dramatic change from Pontormo's earlier works, and differs from his later works as well. The direction of the real lighting in the church falls from windows along the nave and over the front entrance; in the painting, this translates to a soft general lighting. Yet, we are shown that the painted light falls from the left by the curious passages to the right of the Evangelist and St. Francis, in which a dark, almost cut-out edge contrasts with the lit drapery of the figures behind, firmly but puzzlingly placing these two figures in the foreground. Pontormo here seems to be experimenting with *chiaroscuro*, but further than in the *Visitation* in that here he has allowed the obscuring abilities of darkness and shadow to take over. Vasari describes the colouring as "*sì vivo*" which could be translated as "lively" or alternatively "lifelike";[31] in either case, his words come as quite a surprise when faced with visual evidence. In the *Visitation* and indeed in earlier works, Pontormo used *chiaroscuro* to indicate depth in the work, but here only figures, especially the Madonna and the two

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29 Vasari/Bull, 2:246; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:315: "*...la più bella tavola che mai facesse questo rarissimo pittore.*" Clapp (p. 127) states that the altar was erected in 1518 and restored in 1872; he does not comment as to whether the painting was part of this restoration. See Freedberg and Cox Rearick: 7-10; David Franklin, "A Document for Pontormo's S. Michele Visdomini altar-piece," *Burlington Magazine* 132 (1990): 487-9; Graham Smith, "Pontormo's Visdomini Altar and Dürer's Small Woodcut Passion," *Paragone* 25 (1974): 82-88. For a new drawing associated with the altarpiece see: George Goldner, "New drawings by Perugino and Pontormo," *Burlington Magazine* 136 (June 1994): 365-7.

30 See Franklin, "Visdomini": 488.

31 Vasari/Bull, 2:246 (for lively); Vasari/Barocchi, 5:315: "*con un colorito sì vivo*". I am grateful to Dr. Patricia Rubin for the interpretation of this as "lifelike".

standing *putti*, emerge from this darkness. It is possible that were the altarpiece to be cleaned this darkness would lift to a certain extent. In this painting, all that happens to the colour results from light: either the palette dims and darkens as a result of its absence or becomes quite pale when it is strong. Furthermore, Pontormo experiments here with light in relation to physical arrangement and setting, in that the shadow shrouds the Madonna the most, in her position seated inside the apse, while the foreground saints -- St. John the Evangelist and St. Francis -- as well as the Baptist and Christ Child are created with fairly bright highlights and deep shadow. This gives a sense of deepening shadow to the background and high *rilievo* to the foreground, thereby more emphatically placing the figures in the shallow space; in fact there exists a strong inconsistency between the depth created by the lighting and the physical depth of the apse. Already this lighting goes beyond Andrea's more moderate use of *chiaroscuro* in colour modelling, in that here Pontormo takes the further step of using uncharacteristically dark hues in the shadows and using them more assertively to indicate spatial relationships. It is difficult to comment on the broader implications of this use given the condition of the painting; however, it is possible that this change may be linked with the revival of Leonardo's *chiaroscuro* that happened in Florence in the late 1510s.[32] At that point in time, Pontormo could likely have seen the *Adoration of the Magi* (Fig. 44) and the Annunziata *St. Anne* picture, both of which would have given a good idea of Leonardo's approach to colour in panel painting. It may well be that were the Visdomini altarpiece cleaned, it would be found to have the same sort of underpainting that Pontormo could have seen Leonardo using. Although the younger artist would not have seen a finished Leonardo image, it certainly would not be too great a leap to deduce how Leonardo's technique would have interacted with hues. And given Pontormo's earlier contact with Leonardo, he would likely have had an interest in following his former master's work.

In the modelling, it is important to stress that the pose and volume of the forms are first visible rather than the local hues themselves although the possible problems of the painting's condition must be kept in mind; the palette may well be more similar to later works such as the *Vertumnus and Pomona* at Poggio a Caiano. The lines made by the forms themselves -- not their outlines -- are the mainstay of the composition.[33] It is in this painting that Pontormo came the closest in his career to tonal modelling, adding black or brown to create shadows and white or a desaturated

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32 For a discussion of this revival in relation to Mannerist artists, see: Kathleen Weil-Garris Brandt [Posner], *Leonardo and Central Italian Art: 1515-1550* (New York: New York University Press, 1974), 26-28 and 37ff.

33 Shearman states that in this work all colours are subordinated to the plastic requirements of the work; see Shearman, "Developments," 262.

version of the local colour for highlights. However, he carefully chose his palette so that this use of brown and black will appear logical in relationship to the local hues, particularly in the foreground browns, reds, greys, and whitish-yellow neutrals. This is in contrast to what later happens in the Capponi chapel altarpiece, where Pontormo learned to use white as the high end and came to realise that it is then that the colour shines through even more; in this panel though, all is lost to darkness. It is from this relatively neutral foreground that the Madonna pushes forth in blue and red; she also contains the areas of greatest highlight on her right knee, breast and cuff. Both these highlights and the unique blue make her stand out from the darkened background.

The general purpose of the composition is to focus attention on the Holy Family group: the Madonna, Joseph and Christ, but in particular on the Madonna, and more unusually on St. Joseph, to whom the altar is dedicated. However, rather than use a balanced compositional precedent, such as Michelangelo's *Doni Tondo* (c.1504-7; Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi) (Fig. 23) with the addition of saints, Pontormo created a curiously unbalanced composition; in this manner he fulfilled the unique requirements of this altarpiece by showing the Madonna passing the Christ Child to Joseph, picking up the idea of passing the child from Madonna to Joseph from works such as the *Doni Tondo* and Raphael's *Madonna dell'Impannata* (1513-14; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti) (Fig. 85), the latter of which is frequently cited as a compositional precedent. The reds in the composition play the main role in organisation, together with the blue in the Madonna which draws attention to her. The red drapery of the standing St. James leans in towards the centre, emphasised by his arm, which clearly points us to the Madonna; Pontormo used a similar standing figure to frame the outer edge of the Annunziata *Visitation*. Equally, the angled red drapery across the Evangelist's right knee only slightly stabilises this, balancing this upper movement while equally framing St. Joseph between the red of the Madonna and of the Evangelist.

This compositional lean towards Joseph and the Madonna, while logical in terms of content, makes the arrangement appear off-balance, a description that cannot be applied to Pontormo's prior works; it is something which he will increasingly explore in his subsequent work, particularly in the Passion Cycle at the Certosa and in the altarpiece for the Capponi Chapel. With each of these works, the Visdomini Altar shares a further, relevant feature in that the composition balances itself when viewed from one side. The logical angle for viewing would be from the right, upon entering the church. From this vantage point, the right side of the composition becomes a curve which pushes Christ towards us and makes Joseph's lap into a space rather than a flat, odd area. The curved, lower edges of St. Francis' and the Evangelist's draperies anchor the composition. However, when viewed from the left, the composition stabilises even more, becoming the stable pyramidal composition favoured in the

early decade of the sixteenth century.. On the other hand, from this viewpoint Christ is not presented to us nearly as emphatically as when viewed from the right. Perhaps then, the viewpoint in this case was not considered, or equally it could be that, as this would be Pontormo's initial experiment, that it did not prove as successful as intended. For now, this sort of analysis must remain in the realm of conjecture.

Perhaps the greatest anomaly about the Visdomini altarpiece is that the colour in the two panel paintings executed before and after bear no resemblance to it. In both the panels for the Pierfrancesco Borgherini bedroom and the Empoli *St. Michael* and *St. John the Evangelist* (c.1519; Empoli: San Michele a Pontorme) (Fig. 86), Pontormo used vibrant, fully saturated hues which we can categorise much more easily than those in the Visdomini altar.[34] Importantly, both paintings are in better condition, or at least their colour more clearly visible than the Visdomini panel, the Borgherini panels having been cleaned sometime circa 1979 and the Empoli panels in 1980.[35] Pontormo painted four panels for Salvi Borgherini (all London: National Gallery): one large, long panel: the *Distribution of Grain to Joseph's Brothers and the Arrest of Simeon* (c. 1515-16) (Fig. 87); one large squarish panel: *Jacob and Joseph in Egypt* (c. 1518-19) (Fig. 88); and two small panels of approximately the same size: *Joseph Sold to Potiphar* (c. 1516-17) (Fig. 89); and the *Butler Restored and the Baker Led to Prison* (c. 1516-17) (Fig. 90).[36] The first of these most likely sat in the *tornaletti* around the bed, the largest possibly hung to the left of the doorway on its own and the two smaller panels were mounted above the bed. In all his Borgherini panels, Pontormo used fully saturated hues, focusing them around the central events in the four narrative panels. For example: in the *Jacob and Joseph in Egypt* panel Pontormo called attention to and distinguished the left hand scene, in which Joseph introduces his father to Pharoah, with blue; in the lower right scene, in

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34 On the former, see Braham, "Borgherini": 754-65; The bibliography for the Empoli panels expanded greatly with the post-restoration publications and the thoroughness of these articles on issues of original placement, appearance with *Pietà* lunette, etc. means these subjects will not be treated herein: see Rosanna Caterina Proto Pisani, "I Santi di Pontorme," in *Empoli*, 53ff. See also Rosanna Caterina Proto Pisani, Marco Ciatti, et. al., *Il Pontormo: Restauro e ricollocazione dei due "Santi" nella Chiesa di S. Michele a Pontorme* (Empoli: Comune di Empoli, 1986); this includes a report on the restoration which unfortunately does not contain any pigment information; Rosanna Caterina Proto Pisani, "Il restauro e la ricollocazione dei due Santi di San Michele a Pontorme," and Walfredo Siemoni, Walfredo: "Il tabernacolo del SS. Crocifisso in S. Michele a Pontorme", both in *Bollettino Storico Empolese* 8 (December 1985): 269ff and 273ff respectively. Siemoni argues that the S. Michele panel was executed, not for the "Capella della Madonna" in the church of Sant'Agnolo as Vasari tells us, but for the chapel of the SS. Crocifisso in S. Michele a Pontorme in Empoli.

35 Braham, "Borgherini": 754 and Proto Pisani, "Santi," 270 respectively; for the restoration report on the Empoli altarpiece see: Proto Pisani, Ciatti, et. al.

36 The exact dimensions, from Costamagna, *Pontormo*, cat. 19-22 respectively are: 36.3 x 142 cm; 61 x 51.6 cm; 61 x 51.7 cm; and 96 x 109 cm.

which Joseph receives a petition, Pontormo highlights with yellow and lilac; and in the upper right scene, in which Joseph's dying father blesses Ephraim, the artist employs green and purple to the same effect; throughout, Joseph wears a brown tunic with a lilac drape.[37] In *Joseph sold to Potiphar* Pontormo perfectly keyed the yellows of Joseph's robe from Andrea's *Early Life* panel and Granacci's *Prison* panel creating with colour a narrative unity among the three; in the *Butler and Baker* scene in which Joseph does not appear, Pontormo used fewer warm hues, and instead introduced more colours such as blue, lilac and a rather icy pink, thus succeeding in setting this apart as the only scene from the early life not involving Joseph. As discussed in the Andrea chapter, the *Distribution of Grain* panel not only marks a new level in terms of narrative -- Joseph's new life in the service of the Pharoah -- but also in terms of symbollic colour; here Joseph now wears the Christ-like hues of pale red and blue, colours he continues to wear through the rest of the images. Bacchiacca's four smaller scenes which continue from Pontormo's do not match the former in terms of its fully saturated, brilliant hues; Bacchiacca used more subdued hues and showed more concern than Pontormo with harmonising the tonalities of the works. He was faced with more complicated scenes, often having to fit as many as ten figures into the smallest of panels.[38] In all of these images Bacchiacca clearly used colour and hats to differentiate between the many figures; the same figures appear throughout, dressed in the same hued clothing, clearly marking them as the individual brothers.

The actual details of the interaction between the artists during work for the Borgherini will never be known to us; however, the level of input of each artist remains clear. In terms of colour, it seems highly unlikely that such a carefully arranged and thought-out colour scheme, involving repetitions of modelling from scene to scene and from artist to artist could have happened accidentally. It seems also, from the points at which the scheme changes, that Andrea del Sarto and Pontormo acted as the guiding forces, with the latter perhaps receiving his cues from the former. Clearly though, each artist did exercise a certain level of autonomy, as witnessed by the spaciousness and sparseness of Granacci's scenes, and the tonally darker quality of the colours in Bacchiacca's images. What we have been given is a complex of panels with a guiding force in terms of colour organisation but one in which each artist could still let his own style come through.

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37 See Braham, "Borgherini": 761 who states that this panel was apparently a separate item in the decoration, placed by Vasari to the left of the doorway; dated later than the others, c. 1519.

38 More work needs to be done on the Bacchiacca panels; the subjects of his first two scenes have never been properly identified. I am not convinced that the second scene shows *Simeon Taken to Prison*, nor am I convinced that the first shows Joseph ordering the imprisonment of his brothers. However, this is not the place for sorting out such dilemmas.

Pontormo painted the altarpiece with St. John the Evangelist and St. Michael (c. 1519; Pontorme: San Michele) (Fig. 86), for his own home parish church of San Michele in Pontorme.[39] Proto Pisani correctly discussed colour in this work as a precursor to the Santa Felicità altarpiece in its vividness and briefly treated the play of tones of red and grey back and forth between the two figures. In addition, we must also draw connections with the earlier Visdomini altarpiece, not in saturation level of colour, but in the way in which both images betray an interest on Pontormo's part in exploring the effect of dark background and dark local hues on colour composition.[40] In the San Michele altar, Pontormo used dark tunics (or armour) to set off drapes of brilliant, vibrant pink in the case of the Evangelist and red in the case of San Michele. However, this relationship between saturated colours and lit background does not always hold true; in fact Pontormo's final refutation of it comes over ten years later in the Carmignano *Visitation* panel in which fully saturated, brilliant colours are set against a relatively shadowed background. In the *Cosimo il Vecchio* portrait (c. 1518-19; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi) (Fig. 91), executed around this same time, Pontormo dimmed the lighting, but we still have a deep red, colour modelled drape, with outlines defined with none of the murky background blurring which we find in the Visdomini work. It seems that during this period Pontormo was casting around to the various influences available to him: the darkness of some Raphael works; the fully saturated hues seen with Albertinelli; the soft modelling of Andrea's frescoes; Leonardo's *chiaroscuro*. Pontormo also experimented with all these possible combinations, something he continued to do throughout his career. However at this stage the inconsistencies produced by his trials are the most marked and difficult to interpret. These contradictory treatments, in works executed at the same time as the Visdomini, lead me to believe that the Visdomini altar was an experiment in working with dark tones and lighting levels which was then emphatically, and throughout the rest of his career, rejected.

According to Vasari, Pontormo first met Ottaviano d' Medici when he did the portrait of Cosimo il Vecchio for Messer Goro da Pistoia, secretary to the Medici. Vasari goes on to tell us that Ottaviano and Pontormo became friends, thus beginning a lifetime of Medici commissions for Pontormo; when Leo X wanted the great hall at Poggio a Caiano to be painted, Ottaviano commissioned Pontormo to paint the lunette-shaped ends. Vasari makes a further comment that "while he (Pontormo) was working on this project, Leo met his death, and so it remained unfinished [*imperfetta*],

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39 The painting received known attention from restorers in 1680, 1933, 1947 and 1955, mostly to reattach paint loss and to stabilise the wood support; see Marco Ciatti, & Massimo Seroni, "Analisi dell'opera e note di restauro," in Proto Pisani, Ciatti et. al.

40 See Proto Pisani in *Empoli*, 55

as did many other similar [*simili*] kinds of work at Rome, Florence, Loreto and other places ..."[41] In fact, Pontormo only finished one of the frescoes -- the *Vertumnus and Pomona* (c. 1521; Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medicea) (Fig. 92) -- showing, as Vasari tells us, Vertumnus and his husbandmen on one side and on the other Pomona and Diana with other Goddesses, the main protagonists being the two outermost figures on the first level.[42] There has been some controversy surrounding the true subject of the painting; Cox-Rearick offers the most recent and multi-levelled reading, with the Vertumnus and Pomona subject as the most primary, with additional mythological-literary and political-Medicean levels. This is clearly beyond the present interests, other than to note the helpful identification of the figure with the white shawl on the right side upper wall as Luna-Diana, and the listing of red, blue and gold as the colours from the Medici *stemma*.[43]

The lighting for the painting presented a unique problem for Pontormo; the circular window in the centre of the lunette not only made the composition difficult, but furthermore meant that the viewer would be looking directly into the light source.[44] This would make the lunette less legible and with no logical source of light in the painting. The only other windows in the Salone are two pairs on the end walls near ground level, across from and below the lunettes. The lighting on the two *putti* closest to the window -- the left *putto* lit from the right and vice versa -- implies that the circular window lights the composition, which the figures on the left half confirm; only the back of the lower left woman gives a clear indication of the direction of illumination in the right half. The lack of depth and a brightly lit sky background eliminate any *chiaroscuro* making the sense of depth, or *relievo*, caused by light on drapery, much less than it would be were the figures arranged in a space which receded further into the background, or in a more strongly lit environment. This means that the fresco does not compete with the window in terms of space.

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41 Vasari/Bull, 2:251; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:319: "*Ma mentre che si lavorava quest'opera, venendo a morte Leone, così rimase questa imperfetta, come molte altre simili a Roma, a Firenze, a Loreto et in altri luoghi ...*" On this work see also: Kathleen Weil-Garris Posner, "Comments on the Medici Chapel and Pontormo's Lunette at Poggio a Caiano," *Burlington Magazine* 115 (1973): 641-9.

42 Vasari/Bull, 2:251; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:318-19; Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty*, 121-3. See also Bardazzi and Castellani.

43 Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty*, 129; see also Frederick Cooper's interesting article on the influence of theatre on Pontormo which focuses on the Poggio a Caiano frescoes: Frederick A. Cooper, "Jacopo Pontormo and Influences from the Renaissance Theater," *Art Bulletin* 55 (1973): 380-92. Cooper additionally identifies the subject as *The Two Friendly Rivals* from a Jacopo Nardi play of c. 1513-15: see Cooper, 390ff. On the frescoes see also Julian Kliemann, *Andrea del Sarto: il tributo a Cesare (1519-21)*, ex. cat., Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medicea a Poggio a Caiano (1986).

44 Raphael faced this same problem with the *Liberation of St. Peter* in the Stanze and solved it by using *chiaroscuro* to carry the scene; see Hall, *Meaning*, 104.

In terms of modelling, Pontormo has become more concerned with creating a stronger sense of *rilievo* since the last fresco the Annunziata *Visitation*, particularly in the darker green on the lower right closest to the window. Of particular interest is the woman on the lower left: Pontormo modelled her in the lilac to creme *cangiante* so prevalent in both his and Andrea's Annunziata frescoes. However, here both the depth of range and the depiction of drapery as material have become greater. It is perhaps evidence of the pigments used or their condition that this same range does not occur in the upper figures' drapery.

Pontormo chose a very desaturated palette for the modelling in this work, and, as mentioned, used a fairly narrow range. The hues have very little in common with the bright reds, yellows and blues of the *Visitation*; instead the artist selected dark greens, rusts and lilacs more fitting with the site, in what would have been at the time the undulating Tuscan countryside outside Florence. This reinforces the idea -- discussed by David Summers -- arising again in the mid sixteenth century that hues must be suitable to what they represent, hinting at the idea of a decorum of colour.[45] In this instance, a particularly specific and unique location, patron and subject allow a more detailed understanding of what this might be -- representing ideas of the country, earth, nature, etc. -- than in a religious work. Pontormo's choices of lilac, rust, white, green, gold and a pale blue repeat throughout the composition, emphasising hues much more related to the Tuscan palette than the bright, fully saturated hues seen earlier; we know from his colour in works such as the SS. Annunziata *Visitation* that this is not solely related to the fresco technique.

Here, white begins to appear as a local colour, which it has not yet done in Pontormo's panel paintings; it will go on to play an even greater organisational role in the Certosa frescoes. He reinforced the lack of apparent depth in part by covering the background sky, which could create spatial recession, with the all-important laurel branches, thus keeping our attention firmly in the foreground. Pontormo then underlined this effect by repeating almost all of the main drapery hues in either the sky or the laurels and wreaths above. The repetition of white throughout the composition also pulls us forward as we read it from Vertumnus' tunic across the lower right man through the cuffs and wraps of each of the female figures. Due to this repetition, and also to the brighter and larger draperies in the right half, the composition is slightly imbalanced towards that side; it remains uncertain as to the reason for the upper level male being nude, as were he draped it would balance the composition. This seems to be an intentional move, particularly as this intentional unbalancing carries throughout all the Certosa frescoes.

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45 For this quote and a more in depth discussion on Paolo Pino's 1548 comments, see: David Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 43 and 469, n. 8.

This does not seem to be the first time that Pontormo denied space in a composition: surely that was one of the aims of the Visdomini altarpiece. However, this is the first time that he used colour, and indeed mainly colour, to achieve that end. Andrea used a similar technique of repetition of colours throughout the composition in the *Tribute to Caesar*, and indeed both artists did earlier at the Annunziata, though in these cases it was in the context of a physically conceived notion of space in which this repetition moved us into and out of depth. In the Visdomini, Pontormo used hues to try to make sense of the space, for example to bring out the Madonna, but more as a result of the physical structure he used to arrange his figures. In the Vertumnus and Pomona, Pontormo faced creating a "celestial realm" and chose to do this in a very flat space, the old methods to begin to deny the space of which we know he is capable of creating.[46] Raphael resorted to the same technique of flattening space in the Stanze when he had to paint around a window, for example in *St. Peter Being Released from Prison*.[47] In Pontormo's work, it is not until the Certosa frescoes that we get the stage-like settings with figures on the surface; this technique reaches its extreme end in the settingless altarpiece for the Capponi Chapel.

One important suggestion is that Pontormo made a trip to Rome in connection with this work. Shearman posits that all of the artists made a trip around 1519-20 to discuss the Salone *modelli* with the patron, as he detects an increase in Roman elements in changes made to Andrea's *modello* for his *Tribute to Caesar* fresco.[48] Cox-Rearick picks up the same suggestion, speculating that Pontormo actually went later than the other artists to Rome, as his early drawings for the work show a greater influence of Michelangelo's New Sacristy in San Lorenzo. This later commencement of work would furthermore account for the fact that Pontormo's portion remained unfinished.[49] The pose of the Sol-Apollo figure on the upper left wall clearly refers to Michelangelo's *Jonah* in the Sistine Chapel, which further lends support to the thesis of the trip having been made at this time. Cox-Rearick also cites similarities between the Sistine Ceiling -- presumably with the *ignudi* -- and the first compositional study (Uffizi 454F, Cox-Rearick fig. 123).[50] She states that the general developments of the composition seem to be towards an easing of spatial crowding and a relaxing of relations between figures, feeling that the influence of Raphael's lunette in the Stanza

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46 On the lunettes as a celestial realm, see Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty*, *passim*.

47 I am grateful to Prof. Martin Kemp for bringing this comparison to my attention.

48 Shearman, *Andrea*, 86-88.

49 Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty*, 91 and Weil-Garris Posner, "Lunette": *passim*.

50 Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 178; for a general discussion of Pontormo's probable trip to Rome at this time, see 166-7 concerning the study for a Creation of Eve (Uffizi 465F; Cox-Rearick fig. 114) in which she considers that the impact made on Pontormo at this time by the Sistine Ceiling is too deep and powerful to have been made by small-scale drawings. Furthermore, the body line and back view of the woman nearest the window is similar to the woman on the right of Michelangelo's Ezechias lunette and the Libyan sibyl.

della Segnatura has increased.[51] In general she seems to find that while initially many of the figures in the drawings are direct quotes from the ceiling, Pontormo moves away from the original Michelangelesque forms in quite a few. It is possible that the conflict in Pontormo's mind -- betrayed in the drawings -- over the effect he wished the influence of Michelangelo's work to have on his own painting, was displayed through the colour in this work. The overall tenor of the work also hints at a Roman quality in terms of scale and meaning; the classical subject matter of the wall frescoes and their large scale certainly show an interest on Leo X's part at least, in establishing a Roman type series of frescoes in his Florentine home.[52]

As to the effect of a trip to Rome on Pontormo's colour at this stage, it seems more likely that in this instance he wished to remain more in line with the Sartesque tradition of more muted hues and subtle modelling. There seems little evidence of the sorts of heavily saturated, brightly juxtaposed hues seen in fresco in the Sistine Ceiling or the Stanze, and the similarities with both Andrea's and Pontormo's previous fresco work are too strong to deny. Unfortunately, the drawings give no indication as to what level of saturation Pontormo considered using at the early stages when the presumed influence of the Ceiling was much stronger. While there are few true quotes, the entire ethos of the Poggio a Caiano fresco remains indebted to Michelangelo's ceiling. First, the flat disposition of figures close to the picture plane, with volume and architecture -- as opposed to perspectival recession -- provides the only indication of depth. Second, the greater levels of *rilievo* achieved through *cangiante* in the lower right woman may owe some debt to the Sistine lunettes. Third, the conception of the composition as figures displayed flatly against a (near) monochrome background may well derive from the Sistine lunettes and the *ignudi*. And fourth, the way Pontormo disposes his figures on steps with beige backgrounds owes much to Michelangelo's forefather lunettes, save that Pontormo has reduced the size and multiplied the numbers. However, it does not seem that the brilliant colouring of the lunettes has affected Pontormo at this stage. It will take until certain passages of the Certosa cycle, particularly the Pietà, for the effect of the saturated hues in the Sistine to take hold.

As previously mentioned, both Pontormo and Andrea had parts in this commission and presumably they would have renewed their contact with each other's work at Poggio a Caiano. Vasari does not mention any relationship between the two in the context of this commission. However some connections certainly can be drawn, despite obvious limitations resulting from difference in size and shape of field and subject matter. Both frescoes display an interest in a light-infused atmosphere,

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51 Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 179.

52 I am grateful to Prof. Graham Smith for reminding me of the importance of the Roman context.

Andrea's logically being the stronger of the two. The modelling techniques and physical presence of the figures differ in that Andrea created much more weighty forms, while Pontormo's are much more lithe and graceful; these differences not only underline the respective subjects but also relate to the direction in which each man's work is moving. The palette in the *Tribute to Caesar* gives the idea of gem-like hues, sparkling and varied whereas Pontormo's choice of more subdued colours reinforced the pastoral nature of his work. Unfortunately, Andrea and Pontormo had no more direct points of contact but their stylistic dialogue certainly went on as both men continued to work in Florence.

While it is tempting at this juncture to draw broad conclusions regarding Pontormo's early career, it seems more appropriate to mention the areas which Pontormo showed an interest in exploring, with an eye towards their development or rejection in later phases. Throughout these early works, Pontormo betrayed an interest in systems of lighting as they affect modelling, playing between fully saturated, fully lit forms and shrouded, dark forms. Furthermore, the way in which these relate to space increasingly becomes an issue for Pontormo. The relationships between physical settings, lighting, and saturation, and their combined effect on the perception of depth all run as themes throughout these early works. Rather than a linear development, they are a series of experiments with a variety of influences. It is not until his more mature paintings, done after a substantial amount of work in both panel and fresco, that we see full conception of the potential of these issues.

THE PASSION CYCLE AT THE CERTOSA

Pontormo's large scale project which followed relatively close upon the collaborative work at Poggio a Caiano involved a very different type of subject and a very different type of patron. Upon first exposure, Jacopo Pontormo's fresco cycle at the Certosa del Galluzzo (frequently also referred to as either the Certosa di Val d' Ema or Firenze) seems a strange and fragmentary example of the work of a man in exile. Although in scholarship, the original placement of the frescoes in the cloister has excited the most interest, these works also have broad implications for the development of colour usage both in Pontormo's own style, and for the period as a whole. In order to fully understand these images, it is also vital to take into account the monastic order which commissioned the work, and the monastery -- the Certosa di Galluzzo -- itself. The important relationship of these paintings to the work of Albrecht Dürer and the late Gothic tradition also needs to be examined in the context of these works, not exhaustively, but rather to support the new emotional level which arose from these works and to aid in understanding the strong influence they had on Pontormo's style in these and other paintings. This also offers an opportunity to examine briefly Dürer's short theoretical writings regarding colour.

Vasari discusses Pontormo's Passion cycle for the Certosa in great detail. At the beginning of his comments he writes:

> Then in the year 1522, when there was an outbreak of plague in Florence, and so many left the city and fled in search of safety from this contagious disease, Jacopo was also given the opportunity to go some distance away and flee the city, because a certain prior of the Certosa, a monastery built by the Acciaiuoli family three miles from Florence, had to have some pictures painted in fresco at the corners of a very large and beautiful cloister that surrounds a lawn, and he was told about Jacopo. The friar had him sought for and, having accepted the work very willingly at such a time, Jacopo went to the Certosa, taking with him only Bronzino. And having tasted that way of life, the quiet, the silence, and the solitude (all things in accord with Jacopo's inclinations and nature), he thought he would use the occasion to let his paintings reveal great strength of effort, and to show the world that they had come to express greater perfection and a varied style from the works he had done previously.[53]

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53 Vasari/Bull, 2:252-3; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:319: "*L'anno poi 1522 essendo in Firenze un poco di peste, e però partendosi molti per fuggire quel morbo contagiosissimo e salvarsi, si porse occasione a Iacopo d'alontanarsi alquanto e fuggire la città. Perché avendo un priore della Certosa, lugo stato edificato dagl'Acciaiuoli fuor di Firenze tre miglia, a far fare alcune pitture a fresco ne' canti d'un bellissimo e grandissimo chiostro che circonda un prato, gli fu messo per le mani Iacopo; per che avendolo fatto ricercare e egli avendo molto volentieri in quel tempo accettata l'opera, se n'andò a Certosa, menando seco il Bronzino solamente. E gustato quel modo di vivere, quella quiete, quel silenzio e quella solitudine (tutte cose secondo il genio e natura di Iacopo), pensò con quella occasione fare nelle cose dell'arti uno sforzo di studio e mostrare al mondo avere acquistato maggior perfezione e variata maniera da quelle cose che avea fatto prima.*"

Thus, Vasari opens his discussion of these works firstly by telling us briefly of the commission and then how much the life there suited Pontormo. Secondly, he follows this with a discussion of the -- in his opinion -- detrimental effect Pontormo's exposure to the woodcuts of Albrecht Dürer, which appeared in Florence early in the century, had on the Italian.[54] Following the discussion of the works themselves, Vasari again tells us of Pontormo's affinity with the monastery:

> Now not only did Jacopo invariably take a long time over his paintings, but he also liked the solitude of the Certosa, and so he spent several years on the work he did there; then the plague ended and he went back to Florence, but even so he did not stop frequenting the place, and he was constantly coming and going between Certosa and the city.[55]

Jacopo's fondness for the monastery and the negative influence on him by Dürer's works infuse Vasari's entire discussion of Pontormo's work at the Certosa, and should therefore be kept in mind through the present discussion. The question of Dürer's influence will be treated after the discussion of the frescoes.

Vasari's description of the aspects of Carthusian life which appealed to Pontormo, in particular solitude, comes under one of the general themes of his life of the artist and in fact of some of the other artists about whom he wrote biographies.[56] The idea that artists work best in solitude and seclusion, and that work suffers when done with others' assistance, reappears later in the Vasari description of Pontormo's life with regards to the work on the Capponi chapel in Santa Felicità in Florence:

> And so, having put up a barrier, which kept the chapel closed for three years, he set his hand to the work ... and so as to do this work in his own way, and allow no one to be a nuisance to him, he would never, when he was busy on it, want even the patron himself to see it. And thus, having painted it in his own way, without even any of his friends being able to point anything out, when it was finally uncovered and seen, all Florence marvelled at it.[57]

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54 For more on the negative effect of the German style, see: Patricia Lee Rubin, *Giorgio Vasari: Art and History* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), 86.

55 Vasari/Bull, 2:255-6; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:321-2: "*E perché, oltre all'essere Iacopo per ordinario lungo ne'suoi lavori, gli piaceva quella solitudine della Certosa, egli spese in questi lavori parecchi anni; e poi che fu finita la peste, et egli tornatosene a Firenze, non lasciò per questo di frequentare assai quel luogo et andare a venire continuamente dalla Certosa all città.*"

56 On Vasari's use of models for his *Lives*, see Rubin, *Vasari*, 81.

57 Vasari/Bull, 2:257-8 and Vasari/Barocchi, 5:323: "*E così fatta una turata, che tenne chiusa quella cappella tre anni, mise mano all'opera ... E per potere in ciò fare a suo modo, acciò non gli fusse da niuno rotta la testa, non volle mai, mentre fece quest'opera, che neanche il padrone stesso la vedesse; di maniera che avendola fatta a suo modo, senza che niuno de' suoi amici l'avesse potuto d'alcuna cosa avertire, ella fu finalmente con maraviglia di tutto Firenze scoperta e veduta.*" David Franklin also mentions similar accounts in the lives of Ercole de' Roberti and Piero di Cosimo, perhaps Vasari's most noted eccentric, in connection with the Capponi chapel; see Franklin, *Rosso*, 289 n.39 .

Also we hear of his work on the Castello loggia project that:

> ... he shut himself up alone and carried on the work at leisure pursuing his own ideas, while studying with all diligence, so that it should be far better than what was done at Careggi, which he had not executed entirely with his own hand.[58]

And later, when writing about the San Lorenzo choir project, Vasari writes:

> Having then closed off the chapel with walls, boardings and curtains, and given himself over to complete solitude, he kept it for the space of eleven years so firmly locked up, that no living soul except himself ever went in there, neither friends nor anyone else.[59]

These passages should not necessarily be taken literally, as Vasari had a tendency towards exaggeration for his own ends. However, it is important that the Certosa episode was the first time in the Pontormo life that this desire for solitude crops up. And furthermore, unlike the later two episodes where this tendency can be credited to a particular personality trait, in the case of Pontormo's experience at the Certosa we have a direct relationship between the type of life he would have led there, his character and the resultant work.

The Carthusian order in early sixteenth century Italy would have still followed the basic ideas of stability, obedience, poverty, manual labour, solitude, works of devotion to God, and seclusion on cells which were part of the original aims of the order.[60] Monks lived most of their life in their cells, only meeting communally to talk on Sundays when they were allowed a short walk in the countryside.[61] The cells, or more correctly apartments, arranged around the grand cloister provided the focus of monastic life for the Carthusians. Here monks worked, prayed, studied, ate and slept. And any time a monk left his cell, he would walk through this cloister to get anywhere else in the monastery. The cloister also served as a barrier between the

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58 Vasari/Bull, 2:266; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:329: "*Dipoi rinchiusosi dentro da sésolo, andò facendo quell'opera a sua fantasia et a suo bell'agio, studiando con ogni diligenza, acciò ch'ella fusse molto migliore di quella di Careggi, la quale non avea lavorata tutta di sua mano...*" He later adds that the loggia was shut up for five years.

59 Vasari/Bull, 2:269 and Vasari/Barocchi, 5:331-2: "*Avendo egli adunque con muri, assiti e tende turata quella capella e datosi tutto alla solitudine, la tenne per ispazio d'undici anni in modo serrata, che da lui in fuori mai non vi entrò anima vivente, né amici né nessuno.*"

60 Gordon Mursell, *The Theology of the Carthusian Life in the Writings of St. Bruno and Guigo I*, in *Analecta Cartusiana*, ed. James Hogg, vol. 127 (Salzburg, 1988), 177-240; for a fifteenth century Northern attitude to Carthusian solitude, see: Dennis D. Martin, *Fifteenth-Century Carthusian Reform: The World of Nicholas Kempf* (Leiden & New York: E.J. Brill, 1992), 85-7.

61 Guerrino Pelliccia & Giancarlo Rocca, *Dizionario degli Istituti de Perfezione*, 8 vols. (Rome: Edizione Paoline, 1974-), vol. 11; Giovanni Leoncini, *Le Certose della "Provincia Tusciae"*, 2 vols, in *Analecta Cartusiana*, ed. James Hogg, vol. 60, (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1989), 108-114.

monks and the outside world, as one may only enter the grand cloister through the smaller minor cloister, inhabited by *conversi*, or laybrethern. The minor cloister, and in fact the *conversi*, served to insulate the grand cloister and the full monks respectively, from the outside world, thus preserving their monastic seclusion. It is important for our purposes that life in the Carthusian monastery was thus defined by architecture, that the monks trod a path from the cell to the church and to the minor cloister and that they never left the cloister path in doing so.[62] The size of the grand cloister and its unique arrangement places architectural and functional emphasis on its role as the heart of the entire monastery. For Pontormo, the contemplative, silent, and solitary nature of the order, the role of the closter as the central focus, and the dependence of the monks upon it must all have been important to his work.[63]

The Certosa del Galluzzo, about three miles outside Florence on the Siena road, bears a dedication to San Lorenzo de Monte Sacro. Niccolò Acciaiuoli, a wealthy Florentine banker, made provisions in his will of 28 September 1338 for the construction of a Certosa outside Florence with accommodation for twelve monks, a prior, and a small number of *conversi* or laybrethern.[64] Land was donated 8 February 1342 and the monastic section was for the most part complete by 1355; after this time, work focused on the Acciaiuoli palace built adjacent and joined to the monastery partly as defence for the monastery and partly to house Niccolò and his family, although he never was able to visit.[65] The Certosa underwent a small rebuilding project in the 1470s, but it was in 1483 that the major reconstruction of the monastic area began.[66] Work throughout continued until the 1520s and focused on the grand cloister from November 1491 through 1523; it is these projects that for the most part created the Certosa we see today. In 1485, Leonardo Buonafé emerged as prior of the Certosa, and in 1491 decided to reconstruct the Grand Cloister, thereby giving it an internal form equal to the aesthetic of late fifteenth-century architecture.[67]

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62 Wolfgang Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe: The Architecture of the Orders* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 111-124.

63 For a more detailed discussion of Carthusian monasteries, life and Pontormo's work, see my article: "Quiet, Silence and Solitude: the Carthusian Order, the Certosa of Florence and Pontormo's Passion Cycle," *Inferno: The St. Andrews Journal of Art History* [1995]. Ignacio Moreno has addressed the relationship of Carthusian spirituality to Pontormo's work in general in: Ignacio Moreno, "Pontormo's Mysticism and the Carthusians," *Rutgers Art Review* 6 (1986): 55-67.

64 Giovanni Leoncini, *La Certosa di Firenze nei suoi rapporti con l'architettura certosina*, in *Analecta Cartusiana*, ed. James Hogg, vol. 71, (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1980), 103. Leoncini publishes Acciaiuoli's will in Appendix 1, 209ff.

65 Ibid., 103-127.

66 On the first project see Leoncini, *Firenze*, 169-170 and on the major one see 172ff.

67 Leoncini, *Tusciae*, 114. Interestingly, this is the same Buonafé who was involved with Rosso Fiorentino's diasatrous Ripoi altarpiece, originally for the Church of Ognissanti and

At this point the lawn was enlarged, to the detriment of the cells on the north-western side, which completely lost their gardens. In 1500 Buonafé left, and thus far no documentary evidence is available about the decision to have a painted Passion cycle in the cloister, or about who the prior was who made the commission. The payments for Pontormo's commission from 4 February, 1523 to 10 April, 1524 are the main archival evidence we have, although based on information from drawing, it is possible that the last three images painted date as late as 1525-6.[68] We do know that Pontormo lived and worked in the Certosa from sometime in the winter of 1522/3 through 1524 and returned throughout the rest of his life.[69] Presumably he was housed either in the *conversi* area or the *foresteria*, or guesthouse, and would not have actually lived in the grand cloister, tempting though that idea may be, as only full Carthusian monks were allowed to live in the cloister. Additionally it is likely that he participated in some form or another in the religious life there, possibly out of personal motivation. It should be noted that he did continue general work there until 1527.[70] At roughly the same time as the Pontormo decorations, Giovanni della Robbia's *bottega* made a series of roundel busts for the spandrels of the colonnades surrounding the cloister.[71] The Carthusians were forced to close the monastery in 1956, and in 1958 the Certosa became a Cistercian monastery.[72]

Before moving on to the images themselves, mention must be made of their original locations in the cloister, although this will be expanded upon later. The paintings are now in a museum within the monastery, having been detached for the *Mostra di Pontormo* in 1956. However, their original location has come under

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Ridolfo Ghirlandaio, fellow Florentine Mannerists of Pontormo; however Buonafé left the Certosa in 1501 to become rector of the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova in Florence. See Leoncini, *Tusciae*, 114. On Buonafé's work with Rosso and Ridolfo see: David Franklin, "Rosso, Leonardo Buonafé and the Francesca de Ripoi altarpieces," *Burlington Magazine* 129 (1987): 652-662 and David Franklin, "Ridolfo Ghirlandaio's altar-pieces for Leonardo Buonafé," *Burlington Magazine* 135 (January 1993): 4ff.

68 For the payments, see Elizabeth Pilliod, "Pontormo and Bronzino at the Certosa", *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 10 (1992): 77ff and for the later dating, see in particular, 84. The Anonimo Magliabecchiano writes that Pontormo was paid 40 scudi for each image; see Frey, 131. He also adds a mention of a San Benedetto in a chapel beside the church which does not appear in Vasari; this could have been confused with the Vasari mention of a portrait of one of the brothers done over a door in the church. See Vasari/Bull, 2:256.

69 Clapp, 276-9 publishes various payments to Pontormo during his stay at the Certosa which range in date from 4 February 1523 through 5 December 1527. Document XVI (p. 278), dated 26 May 1524, specifically mentions the work in the cloister and as Cox-Rearick has explained, establishes the terminal date for the work in the cloister as 10 April 1524; see Cox Rearick, *Drawings*, 213. Document XIV (p. 277), dated 4 June 1525 mentions a "*cenaculo de la despensa*" which presumably refers to the *Supper at Emmaus* canvas.

70 Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 213. Clapp cites a variety of documents regarding payment but none are specific as to detail of the commission.

71 Leoncini, *Tusciae*, 125.

72 Leoncini, *Tusciae*, 114.

considerable dispute, culminating in articles by Graham Smith and Ignacio Moreno.[73] Graham Smith established in 1979 that the original placement had been in pairs as follows: the *Agony in the Garden* in the west corner of the north-west wall; the *Christ Before Pilate* around the corner from that on the south-west wall; the *Way to Golgotha* in the south corner of the south-east wall; the never-executed *Nailing to the Cross* in the east corner of the south-east wall; around the corner from that in the east corner of the north-east wall the *Pietà*; finally, in the north corner of that wall, in a deeply recessed entryway, the *Resurrection.* The frescoes would therefore have dominated the view at the end of each walkway around the cloister. As previously mentioned this walkway bore a great importance for the lives of the monks, who would view the paintings as they walked around the cloister for their spiritual exercises; this has a great relevance for a later discussion on the viewing of the frescoes; however for the present moment it is better to leave monastic life to begin a better understanding of the images themselves.

It is helpful to have an idea of what Pontormo's original plans for the Cycle were, as what we are left with at present is clearly not what he had originally intended. As Vasari tells us, "Jacopo ... had, at the corners of the cloister, to paint scenes from the Saviour's Passion..."[74] As there is no set number of scenes which make up a Passion cycle, Pontormo's choice would presumably have been governed by the number of spaces available for decoration, in this case six.[75] It is quite possible that either he or the patron decided to have the narrative cycle begin where it does, as the *Agony in the Garden* is immediately adjacent to the door of the prior's apartment, thus making the scene readable in order to anyone leaving his rooms rather than beginning, for example, with the scene first visible after turning out of the main door to the cloister. The actually executed images, of which there are five, are helpfully discussed by Vasari in the order of execution: *Agony in the Garden* (Fig. 93), *Christ Before Pilate* (Fig. 94), *Resurrection* (Fig. 97), *Way to Golgotha* (Fig. 95), and the *Pietà* (Fig. 96). Vasari also tells us that there was to be a *Crucifixion* and a *Deposition*, which he mentions between the *Way to Golgotha* and the *Pietà*; he adds that

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73 Smith, "Arrangement": 61-4; Ignacio Moreno, "Pontormo's Passion Cycle at the Certosa del Galluzzo," *Art Bulletin* 63 (1981): 308-12.

74 Vasari/Bull, 2:253; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:320: "... *Iacopo, avendo a fare ne'canti di que'chiostri istorie della Passione del Salvatore ...*"

75 This would have possibly been discussed in the commission, however to date no such evidence has been discovered. There has been no comment on why the north corner of the northwest wall, past the corner with the *Resurrection*, was not used. Presumably, because the *Resurrection*, the terminal scene of the Passion, was done midway, and there are no drawings for a post-Resurrection scene such as the *Noli Me Tangere* or *Doubting Thomas*, Pontormo made the decision to not use this space early on. Perhaps this was because he was either set with six scenes, or there is a physical or architectural reason, not mentioned in the literature, why this space could not be used.

Pontormo left them for last, and goes on to say that he executed in their place the *Pietà*. Pontormo did studies for the Crucifixion and a simple compositional study for the Deposition, based on a similar composition by Dürer. For whatever reason, he then discarded these ideas and changed to the *Pietà*. He also considered a *Nailing to the Cross* which was never painted.[76] Cox-Rearick catalogues a variety of drawings on these subjects, including a full compositional study for a *Nailing to the Cross*.

The question may be asked as to why Pontormo chose the scenes he did. Paula Beckers has identified a likely iconographical source for the cycle in Ludolph of Saxony's *Vita Christi*, a copy of which the library at the Certosa almost certainly acquired in 1483. As she reports the relevant section of the *Vita* deals with meditations on the Passion.[77] Furthermore, Vasari tells us that Pontormo:

> ...thought he would make use of the inventions of Albrecht Dürer in the firm belief that he would give satisfaction not only to himself but also to the majority of the craftsmen of Florence, who were all, with one voice and by general agreement and consent, proclaiming the beauty of those prints and the excellence of Albrecht.[78]

In similar scenes from Dürer we have the *Agony in the Garden*, *Christ Before Pilate*, *Christ Before Herod*, *Way to Golgotha* and *Nailing to the Cross*; both the *Deposition* and *Nailing* have strong affinities with Dürer's images. In addition to these various influences, Pontormo would have added his own experiences with Carthusian life and artistic impulses.

We also must ask how unique these images are for Carthusian monasteries in the early sixteenth century in Italy. Included in early Carthusian writings is a rejection of any sort of physical beauty or decoration, including in the church.[79] Early in the history of the order, pictures were banned throughout the monastery; instead there was an emphasis on sparse and spartan accommodation.[80] Beginning in the fourteenth century, the order made some modifications, including an increased openness and the development of certain aesthetic canons, both of which began with ideas such as harmony and unity of structure and develop later to include beauty and decoration.[81] Leoncini lists Pavia as the first Italian Certosa to have art outside the

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76 Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 221-2 dates this drawing 1523-4, before the stylistic changes of *Pietà* and *Supper at Emmaus*, and cites strong compositional and stylistic affinities with the *Way to Golgotha*.

77 See Paula Beckers, *Die Passionfresken Pontormos für die Certosa del Galluzzo*, 2 vols. (Salzburg, 1985).

78 Vasari/Bull, 2:253; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:320: "*... pensò Iacopo ... di servirsi dell'invenzioni sopradette d'Alberto Duro, con ferma credenza d'avere non solo a sodisfarre a se stesso, ma alla maggior parte degl'artefici di Firenze, i quali tutti a una voce, di comune giudizio e consenso, predicavano la bellezza di queste stampe e l'eccellenza d'Alberto.*"

79 Mursell, 189 and King, 8-9.

80 See for example King, 9-11.

81 Leoncini, *Firenze*, 73-76.

church.[82] Certainly many of the Tuscan and Italian charterhouses are unusual in the level of decoration, due in part as discussed above to the desires of their wealthy patrons rather than to the monks themselves, although we do know that the monks in general and specifically at Florence exercised a certain control over the architecture and decoration of their monasteries.[83] So far as we know now, Pontormo's are the earliest example of fresco decoration in a Tuscan grand cloister. Frescoes occur in the cloister at Bologna but are related to the tombs spread around the cloister walls. It appears that the Certosa at Pontignano holds the only other frescoes to have decorated a grand cloister; interestingly these frescoes also represent the Passion. However, these frescoes done in the late sixteenth century by Bernardino Poccetti, signify the continuation of the tradition of Passion cycles in the grand cloister, begun by Pontormo in Florence.[84]

In terms of the frescoes themselves, this discussion is limited mainly to colour, although because of the later hypothesis relating colour to location, some emphasis is necessarily placed on composition. Additionally, the state of conservation of the frescoes necessitates this emphasis; the works were open to the elements from the time of their completion in 1524 until 1956 when they were detached for the Mostra and moved indoors. Because of this prolonged exposure, the surface of the paintings has sustained fairly substantial loss, in which much of the modelling layers have been weathered away. Since frescoes were typically modelled with light built up on dark, it is the highlighted layers which appear to have been lost. Unfortunately, the Jacopo da Empoli copies, which could provide valuable information on the original state, have been unavailable for viewing during the time of research for this thesis. Because of these factors, an exploration of their colour is limited to palette and colour composition, as any discussion regarding modelling is severally limited to the few figures which have, for one reason or another, not sustained such heavy loss. This implicitly removes any discussion of light and shade. Specific quotes from Dürer woodcuts are mentioned here with reference to each painting, rather than dealt with separately at a later point. However, as previously mentioned, a larger discussion of the overall relationship to Dürer will appear after this. The works will be treated in order of execution, including a brief discussion on the *Nailing to the Cross* (Fig. 98), as it relates to the previous and subsequent works.

We would approach the first image, the *Agony in the Garden* (Fig. 93), head on as we came from the door, or from its right as we would circumambulate the

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82 Ibid., 85.

83 Ibid., 79.

84 Ibid., 178. These too have been detached and are now on display in the refectory at Pontignano.

cloister, beginning as suggested from the prior's apartment door. Vasari's commentary begins with the *Agony in the Garden*, the first image in both narrative order and execution. He makes a fairly characteristic and damning comment about Pontormo's use of Dürer images as a model for his style here:

> ... pity the simplicity of that man, who sought with so much effort and patience to learn what others flee and try to lose, in order to abandon the style which surpassed all the others in excellence and pleased everyone beyond all measure.[85]

Pontormo seems to have, with few exceptions, looked to Dürer's Small Passion cycle, and generally only borrowed figures from works of the same subject. Here, the figures of both Christ and the angel (only visible in the Jacopo da Empoli copy) are fairly loose adaptations from Dürer, however the v-shaped composition of the left side figures mirrors Dürer's arrangement. The figure at the centre wearing a blue tunic is a pastiche of seated bearded figures in the Small Passion *Christ on the Mount of Olives* and the same subject from the Great Passion. The figure at the left with his head on his hand comes from a similar subject in the Great Passion cycle, and the group of figures at the right appears in both Dürer prints; However here Pontormo has pushed the group forward, and expanded it for greater emphasis on architecture.

The painting itself sustained the most loss in the cycle, especially in the upper left corner, rendering the angel almost invisible. Pontormo depicted his figures with a very narrow palette containing yellow, rust and deep maroon, with the exceptional notes of blue in the sleeping figure, matched only in the sky. The green in the tunic of the figure behind the sleeping figure pushes this figure back, and the sleeping figure forwards, in an opposition of hot and cold colour; furthermore, the green tunic links this group of figures with the landscape. Christ here appears as the only solid, unbroken block of drapery colour. The wedges of yellows in the tunic at left, in the cloak at right, and of the two foreground figures, accentuate the v-shaped composition and focus our attention on Christ. The block of green in the foreground (perhaps a patch of grass or a bush?) establishes a diagonal movement to the same hue seen below the Tuscan houses in the background, serving to move our eye again towards the kneeling Christ figure. This diagonal movement, together with the angle of the head of the back sleeping figure and the lean of the left sleeper, leads us around the corner to the next image.

Turning to the right from the *Agony in the Garden*, or head on as we circumambulate, we would next find *Christ Before Pilate* (Fig. 94). Vasari says of

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85 Vasari/Bull, 2:254; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:320: "*... che le mira della semplicità di quell'uomo, che cercò con tanta pacienza e fatica di sapere quello che dagl'altri si fugge e si cerca di perdere per lasciar quella maniera che di bontà avanzava tutte l'altre e piaceva ad ognuno infinitamente.*"

the group of soldiers around Pilate that they are "so characteristically German in the expressions on their faces and in their clothes, that anyone not knowing by whose hand it was, would be sure it was painted by Northerners."[86] Yet at the same time Vasari cites the background figure on the stairs as possessing "a certain something of Pontormo's old style."[87] In terms of the Dürer woodcuts, Pontormo's work bears a resemblance to both the *Christ Before Pilate* (1511; Bar. 31) (Fig. 99) and *Christ Before Herod* (1511; Bar. 32) (Fig. 100) of the Small Passion. In the former, Pontormo seems to have looked to the two soldiers at the lower edge of the picture (commonly referred to as "cellar" figures) and to the group of soldiers at the left. As Janet Cox-Rearick has noted, the cellar figures seem to come more directly from the Dürer woodcut *The Bath House* (c. 1497; Bar. 128) (Fig. 101), and Irving Lavin has pointed out similar figures in the Donatello pulpit reliefs for San Lorenzo, again in the *Christ Before Pilate* scene. Though as Cox-Rearick mentions, Pontormo chose to filter out the classical elements of Donatello's scene by using Dürer's anti-classical conception of the subject.[88] In Dürer's *Christ Before Herod*, Pontormo looked to the figure of Christ, and the seated Herod figure, as well as the surrounding figures who make various appealing gestures. The direction of gestures, which in Pontormo's fresco seems to govern our understanding of the work, has been changed from the Dürer, in which all gestures flow to Herod but for Herod himself who points to Christ; in the Pontormo, all gestures indicate Christ. A drawing recently acquired by the Art Institute of Chicago showing Pilate fleeing while standard-bearers worship Christ, relates to this image as well.[89] Laura Giles suggests that the drawing demonstrates Pontormo's early ideas for this particular image, while Philippe Costamagna feels it was a preliminary idea for the whole cycle; the latter proposal relates to the complex and relatively obscure subject of the drawing and the idea that the patrons rejected this in favour of more straightforward iconography.[90] Giles'

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86 Vasari/Bull, 2:254; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:320: "... *tanto propriamente, nell'aria de'volti e negl'abiti, tedeschi, che chi non sapesse di cui mano fusse quell'opera, la crederebbe veramente fatta da oltramontani.*"

87 Vasari/Bull, 2:254; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:321: " ...*avendo in sì un certo che della vecchia maniera di Jacopo* ..."

88 Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 215. The motif of these cellar figures needs further invesigation in another context. They appear throughout Florentine fifteenth and early sixteenth century painting, including Fra Filippo Lippi's Uffizi *Coronation of the Virgin* and at least earlier on seem also connected in some way with donor figures. See for example Filippino Lippi's *Vision of St. Bernard* now in the Badia in Florence. Craig Harbison also mentions a print attributed to Baldung in this context, from Ulrich Pinder's *Speculum Passionis* (Nuremberg, 1507); see Craig Harbison, "Pontormo, Baldung and the Early Reformation," *Art Bulletin* 66 (June 1984): 325, ill. p. 326

89 See Laura M. Giles, "*Christ before Pilate*: A Major Composition Study by Pontormo," *The Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 17 (1991): 22-46 and Harriet K. Stratis, "The Technical Aspects of Pontormo's *Christ before Pilate*," *The Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 17 (1991): 47-51.

90 See Giles, 35 and Costamagna, *Pontormo*, 175.

suggestion seems the more plausible of the two as experimentation with compositions and subject matter characterise Pontormo's work throughout the fresco cycle.

This fresco seems to have sustained a lesser extent of loss than some of the other images in the cycle. The knees of the figure of Pilate have remained in adequate condition and these, together with the subtle lilac to blue to white modelling of Christ's drapery, seem to indicate that at this point Pontormo still maintained interest in Andrea del Sarto's more subdued system of modelling, as opposed to the more harsh systems which Rosso proposed in his Volterra *Deposition* of 1521. Pontormo now introduced a palette of great variety; the previous predominance of similar hues of rust and deep maroon have almost gone, save in the solemn figure to Christ's right, the headgear at the left and right and the leggings of the cupbearer. Turquoise now serves as a much brighter organising colour and this, together with the lilac from Christ's tunic, vibrates in the sky at the background. The colouristic impression of the work at present is also heightened by the white armour of the soldiers, although this is certainly not what Pontormo intended; the original impression would have surely been much more restrained in terms of tonal values. Neither Cennino, Alberti nor Vasari make any mention of how to paint armour, although Vasari does write that bronze should be depicted with fairly standard earth pigments going from black to red to yellow to white.[91] Presumably in a fresco, no tin or aluminium leaf could be applied, but certainly these figures would have at least been much more subdued, perhaps in a dark grey to white range, which would calm down the appearance of brightness and excitement which the picture now gives.

A look at the colour composition greatly aids in our understanding of how we are meant to view this piece. The work would be viewed, as you approach the *Agony in the Garden* from the door, from the left; in this case, a downward curve appears from Pilate's body, along with the spear of the left-hand cellar figure and heads of the cellar figures, which points us strongly towards the *Agony in the Garden*, the image with which we are meant to begin our contact with the cycle. However, when you turn toward the *Christ Before Pilate* from the *Agony in the Garden*, now from the lower right, the soldiers heads line up, the list to the right stops, and the hand gestures of the figures become much more clear and legible, irrevocably leading our eye towards Christ. The colours of Herod's and Christ's robes greatly aid this focusing of our attention from this vantage point. Both hues are unique in the composition, and are surrounded by an organising rhythm of green, with the stabilising note of maroon to Christ's left. The backwards "J"-shaped hook of the (grey) soldiers pushes us

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91 Giorgio Vasari, *Vasari on Technique*, transl. Louisa S. Maclehose (New York: J.M. Dent & Co., 1960), 241. For a much earlier, but possibly relevant technique involving tin applied to fresco, see: Leonetto Tintori, ""Golden tin" in Sienese murals of the early trecento," *Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 94-5.

again to the left, towards the central confrontation, as does, from this viewing point, the angled body of the maroon-draped figure. This movement is contained and continued by the gesture and turquoise block drapery of the figure to the right of Christ. This focus upon Christ is enhanced, not only by the fact that he is uniquely clad, but also that he is the only figure spatially on that level, and that he is the only figure, save the small figure in the background, who is not cut off or overlapped in any way. However, this stair figure repetition serves to flatten the composition, as his size seems a bit too large for the distance at which he seems to be. In the figure on the steps, the repetition of Pilate's yellow and maroon drapery enhances this, creating a list to the left. This list leads us on to the *Way to Golgotha*. However the next work, in terms of style and order of execution, is the *Resurrection*.

The *Resurrection* (Fig. 97) would originally have been in a recessed space over a door and therefore not visible as you approach from either side; this is supported by its fairly static, symmetrical composition.[92] It should also be mentioned that this particular fresco, because of the shape of the space in which it was located, is a bit smaller in height than the other images. Vasari writes that

> Having next to paint, in one of the other corners, the Resurrection of Christ, Jacopo, who as someone who with no set mind was for ever dreaming up new things, took a fancy to change his colouring; and so he painted this work with colours in fresco so soft and so good that, had he executed the whole work otherwise than in the German style he was using, it would assuredly have been very beautiful ...[93]

Pontormo seems to have looked again to both the Small and Great Passion cycles for figures. From the Small Passion cycle he freely adapted the Christ figure, as well as the sleeping figure to the left. From the Great Passion we have a more literal "copying" of the Christ figure, including the weightless sense Dürer has given to his figure, as well as the soldiers group at the left. The v-shaped compositional wedge again derives from Dürer, although it is not as overtly articulated in the Pontormo, which misses out on the cloud from the Dürer work.

The fresco has sustained areas of complete loss at the left, in Christ's right shin and ankle and in the right leg of the front right-hand side soldier. The rest of the painting betrays a very crisp, almost abstracted sense of modelling, quite unlike the modelling of the Christ figure in the previous image. In fact, we have some of the

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92 According to the Cistercian monks now resident, the doorway over which the *Resurrection* hung leads to a room which still serves as recreation area for the monks; see also Leoncini's plan (no page number).

93 Vasari/Bull, 2: 254-5; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:321: "*Avendo a far poi in uno degl'altri cantoni la Ressurezzione di Cristo, venne capriccio a Iacopo, come quello che non avendo fermezza nel cervello andava sempre nuove cose ghiribizzando, di mutar colorito; e così fece quell'opera d'un colorito in fresco tanto dolce e tanto buono, che, se egli avesse con altra maniera che con quella medesima tedesca condotta quell'opera, ella sarebbe state certamente bellissima ...*"

angular lines at the point of plane change seen previously in Rosso's *Deposition*, and repeated also more complexly in his *Pala Dei* and *Sposalizio* of about this time. In some instances there also mirror the sharp divisions between light and dark required by the woodcut technique. Shearman in fact comments on this "disintegration of plastic forms" as a parallel with Rosso's interests at the time. However, he states that Pontormo here confuses plasticity by using colour change and illogical lighting.[94] In line with Vasari's comment the palette and colour composition now have become much more complex; Pontormo created his figures with many small, broken planes which are now isolated each to themselves. Likewise, the play of blocks of hues between the shields and clothing as well is much more complex, and there seems more attention to individual detail, such as the complex cuff and knee-wraps of the left-hand soldier. Pontormo seems to have differentiated the colour in his figures in the back and front planes: the back figures are clad in pairs of colours, with blue or white used as an accent. The front two sleeping figures contain many more hues and complex passages of colours. However, Christ again exists as a simple, isolated block of one hue, the same lilac from the previous painting. This, together with the two soldiers, produces a v-shape which surrounds Christ; as we would approach this painting from the right, this seems to make sense. Christ and the knees of the left figure become perfectly upright from this point, and the lines of the lefts and the shadow at the left of Christ accentuate this. The middle spear at the left becomes more vertical as well. The more intense hues at the left -- the turquoise and bright, brick-red -- frame Christ in a hook-shape and push him towards us. There is no list moving us on to the left, and this would be the terminal image in the cycle. Stylistically, we must now return to the third image in the cycle, the *Way to Golgotha.*

Regarding the *Way to Golgotha* (Fig. 95), Vasari writes that:

> ... either because he had been warned by his friends, or because this one time Jacopo realised, belatedly, the harm to his own sweet style his study of the German had done, this scene came out much better than had the others executed in the same place.[95]

Cox-Rearick also comments on the dramatic change in style between this painting -- usually paired stylistically with the unexecuted *Nailing to the Cross* -- and the previous three works; she writes that "the vertical constructions ... have been exchanged for a design whose vertical rhythms are independent of any stabilising axis at all,"[96] and goes on to stress the absence of any spatial depth, accented by the figures

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94 Shearman, "Developments," 267-8.

95 Vasari/Bull, 2:255; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:321: "*Questa storia, o fusse perchè ne fusse avertito dagl'amici, overo che pure una volta si accorgesse Iacopi, benché tardi, del danno che alla sua dolce maniera avea fatto lo studio della tedesca, riuscì molto migliore che l'altre fatte nel medesimo luogo.*"

96 Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 216.

which are only present on the picture plane as opposed to being disposed throughout space. In terms of figural borrowing, this work has the least strong connections with any Dürer images, which would account for Vasari's praise of the work; indeed, the only figure which seems a quote is the man with the ladder, from the same image in the Small Passion. As Cox-Rearick notes, in terms of compositional and figural crowding, Pontormo's work does share fewer details and yet more fundamental similarities with the work of the German. In fact, it is this crowding which makes the events in the composition very difficult to sort out. Helpfully, Vasari tells us that in front of Christ, the two naked thieves and the executioner walk, while the Madonna and the Marys are at the top of the Mound, waiting for Christ, who is surrounded by Jews and Veronica, who offers Him her veil.

Returning to the colour in the image, Pontormo again, as in the *Resurrection*, used a very complex palette, although here it has become even more accentuated as a result of the spatial crowding. As mentioned, the space here has become extremely cramped; Shearman discusses the fact that Pontormo used colour to organise the space, dividing it into two colour groups: first, compassion, in the lower left and right, a section in which colour change becomes important, and second, cruelty, comprising the rest of the space.[97] The use of colour change does seem important in the front figures, especially the two women at the corners of the work. However certain colours, such as rust and maroon seem so pervasive throughout the composition that this sort of divisional ordering seems a bit forced. What it seems Pontormo did was to take the blocks of colour which he introduced in the *Resurrection* and shattered them even more, using hues of gold, lilac, green, yellow, rust, turquoise, and white to organise the work. This further fragmentation of the blocks used for modelling closely parallels the development in Rosso's work from the Volterra *Deposition* through the *Sposalizio* to the *Pala Dei*. Yet in the modelling visible in the Veronica figures, Pontormo's modelling characteristically remains more concerned with the representation of fabric than with the levels of dissolution of form in which Rosso tends to become lost. As in the works by Rosso, Pontormo used a flattening complex of lines that should be logical but is not. For example, the cross, ladder and spears seem to be merely drawn on the picture plane rather than used a indications of pictorial depth; Rosso used the crosses and ladder to the same end in the Volterra *Deposition*. Pontormo accentuated this by the fact that there does not seem to be much differentiation between them in terms of hue to tone; however, one must again be careful here because of the condition of the works themselves. Christ, together with Veronica, who appears in size and detail as the other main protagonist, are the only isolated figures, all others cut off or overlapped in some way. While this

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97 Shearman, "Developments," 268-9.

discussion is not meant necessarily to imply that Pontormo went to Volterra to see Rosso's work, Rosso was working in Florence on the *Pala Dei* at the same time. If nothing else, this shows Andrea's two pupils certainly becoming increasingly involved in some of the same questions.

Pontormo organised the composition by painting green throughout the compositional arc. He put focus on the weeping Mary in that she is the only figure containing lilac and by the fact that she appears as an individual, isolated block of colour. A brief word on the spatial construction of the work is helpful before moving on to discuss the colour in the work, the organisation of which becomes much clearer when viewed from either side. The whole composition is much more comprehensible from the left; however, this is illogical with the walking pattern; the green mass at the back does not dominate the painting as it does from the right. The two horsemen at the upper left turn logically in space, and we look into the chest of the man at the right who support the cross. From the right side, the cellar figure leads us into the composition, through the cross to the horses; from this point we also have a view into the chest of the left-hand cellar figure again, and as with the *Pilate* composition, we feel an identification with the cellar figures.

At this point, both in narrative, and theoretically, in execution, Pontormo should have done the *Nailing to the Cross*. The painting was never executed, but as previously mentioned, the squared compositional study does remain, a further help to reinforce order of execution and to underline Pontormo's intentions at this point (Uff. 6671F) (Fig. 98). Though Janet Cox-Rearick's discussion of the original intended location of the work has been proved incorrect, her dating of 1523-4 seems solid, arising from stylistic affinities with the *Golgotha* composition and differences with the subsequent, simplified *Pietà*.[98] In the drawing, Pontormo clearly shows an arc-shaped compositional interest similar to that in the *Way to Golgotha*; however, it also seems that the organisation has become more clear. Vasari makes no mention of the drawing, saying that Pontormo was meant to paint a Crucifixion and Deposition at this point, but left them for later. In terms of Dürer, Pontormo seems to have looked to the Small Passion for the pivotal standing figure at the left, and the diagonal, dramatic placement of Christ lying on the cross. Here, the interest, as in the *Way to Golgotha*, lies in moving the spectator around the image. The composition lists to the left, with movement stopped by the tall figure on the left-hand side who descends the stair. This figure, together with the cellar figures, give a strong sense of ascent. When viewed from the right, this becomes an inward-turning, clock-wise spiral;

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98 Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 216; on placement of the image, 222. As Moreno, 309-310 indicates, Cox-Rearick misplaced the *Way to Golgotha*, and this caused her to faultily place the *Nailing*. Photographs of the works *in situ*, prior to the detachment, solidly support Moreno's argument.

when viewed from the left, it becomes more stable and almost parenthetical in nature. When viewing the fresco from below and to the right, as you would, the cellar figures would again act as one's introduction to the work, accentuated by the mirror of the legs of the man to Christ's left with Christ's own legs. The hammer at the centre of the arc above underlines the crux of the event. Pontormo unfortunately, as is the case with most of his drawings, gives little indication as to what his ideas were regarding colour, however his compositional interest is evident enough. The strong pull of the viewing from the right, as with the left of Christ, would have lead us around the corner to the next image.

Vasari comments on the "harmonious colouring (*con molta unione di colori*)" and later "softness of colouring (*colorito di dolcezza*)" of the figures in the *Pietà* (Fig. 96), apparently the last image done for the cycle, although possible changes in condition between the completion of the work and Vasari's time must be kept in mind.[99] The palette may be influenced by the sorts of colour moods Pontormo chose for certain subjects, reinforced by a similarity in palette between this image and the later Santa Felicità *Entombment*. In terms of Dürer references, the Magdalene, who kisses the feet of Christ, bears a strong resemblance to the same figure in Dürer's work, as do the floating mourner types, which appear throughout Dürer's work in images such as the Large Passion *Crucifixion* (c. 1497-1500; Bar. 11) (Fig. 102) and *Lamentation* (c. 1497-1500; Bar. 12) (Fig. 103) and the Small Passion *Entombment* (1511; Bar. 44) (Fig. 104). The faces, typical of Dürer's images, staring directly out at the viewer with a feeling of pathos, add to this image's sense of grief and sadness, much the same as the self-portrait in the Santa Felicità *Entombment*. Their directness, combined with the block like nature of their drapery makes the faces almost seem divorced from their bodies, lending to the spiritual, abstracted nature of the image. In composition, Pontormo seems to have returned to the interests of the *Pilate*; the swirling, unstable compositions of the two previous works have been exchanged for a serene, vertical, stable arrangement, befitting the subject matter. The palette contains a variety of pairings of dark over light and vice versa, and Pontormo seems to be revelling in his pigments, as is exemplified by the passage of desaturated blue loin-cloth, pink bier cloth and green ground in the Christ group. The artist returned to simple blocks of colour again, which are even more exposed and isolated than in the *Pilate* composition, and introduces colour change on a greater level, in the woman in the lower right corner, the Magdalene figure and the hat of the figure above her. In colour composition, Pontormo set up a rhythm in which lilac forms the central axis,

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99 Shearman comments on the delicate colours of compassion which infuse the entire group, and serve to enhance the expressiveness of the subject; see "Developments," 269-70. To underline this point, he compares this work with the earlier Poggio a Caiano fresco in which all colour is for decorative ends.

leading us to Christ, the form that radiates red and then green. In terms of viewing location, from the left we still get the lilac leading from the upper right yet we also see the uniqueness of the gold and turquoise. From the right however, the entire composition centralises and stabilises and it is from this point that we understand the overwhelming focus on Christ, emphasised by the Virgin's poignant gesture.

Throughout the discussion on colour, there has been mention made of the way the images can be understood from a particular viewing point. This is not something that would be necessarily relevant for an easel painting. However, for frescoes which were done in a cloister and which, because of the nature of the walkways, would more typically be viewed from an oblique viewpoint, this consideration may be introduced, albeit with extreme caution. In the discussion regarding the usage of cloisters, it was implied that the cloister in a Carthusian monastery would be understood as the focal point of life there, and also as the main walkway for monks as they went on both spiritual exercises and moved around the monastery on their daily errands. Within the compositions, there seems to be a great sense of movement which usually involves a perceived lean to one side, which then stabilises when viewed from another angle. There seem to be two elements in the oblique viewing: firstly, the leading of the viewer to the next composition and secondly, the stabilisation of the composition.[100] This role for colour becomes particularly valid as an asymmetrical viewing of it stresses the surface of the images, especially when used by Pontormo in blocks. Additionally, we must remember that these sorts of observations are subjective and may only be made *in situ*; it is difficult to confirm them, even now as the frescoes are no longer displayed in their original location and we have no idea of the way in which light would interact with them in their original corner sites. Without forcing the point by over-discussion, and with proper acknowledgment of the difficulties of understanding this argument without being able to interact *in situ* with the frescoes, it would still be useful to merely note ways in which colour could reinforce this.

Beginning with the *Agony in the Garden*, adjacent to the door to the prior's apartment, as mentioned we are led into the composition by a diagonal, established by the repetition of greens; this is in turn reinforced linearly by the lean of the two heads, and the angle of Christ's body. In *Christ Before Pilate*, Pontormo used the shapes of the blocks of drapery colour to indicate directions of movement; for example, the inverted L-shape of the turquoise draped figure and the list of the maroon figure to our

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100 This also certainly seems to be the case with the Visdomini Altar, in San Michele Visdomini of c. 1518-19 and it has been suggested that the same might be true in the altarpiece for the Capponi chapel of just a few years later, although both these points will need to be examined in greater detail, at another time.

left indicate the movement of the interchange between Christ and Pilate. This becomes much clearer when viewed from the right, the location at which the viewer would be when turning from the previous *Agony in the Garden*. As we approach this work from the left, there is a strong right-hand slide, leading us to the *Agony*. However, when we turn to it from the *Agony*, the composition stabilises and becomes comprehensible. Much of this revolves around composition, and must be discussed with extreme caution. However it does seems that if Pontormo did take the viewing point into consideration, he also considered the way in which colour could reinforce this.

Another element of these works, hinted at in the individual discussions, which should be looked at in relation to colour, is the influence of Albrecht Dürer.[101] The influence on Pontormo of Dürer's woodcuts provides the first, most concrete link. Vasari talks at great length of this influence, and of how the woodcuts ruined Pontormo's work. He wrote that Pontormo "thought he would make use of the inventions of Albrecht Dürer" but that it then changed the charm of his own style.[102] As seen in the individual discussions, to Vasari, the *Christ Before Pilate* seemed to be the worst offender, in that parts of it were indistinguishable from the hand of a Northerner. In contrast, Vasari considered the *Way to Golgotha* to be the least wayward work, matched to some extent by the *Pietà*. It certainly seems clear in these latter frescoes that Pontormo has returned to the crowded compositions and anti-classical figures in vogue during the Mannerist period, and as such these images would be much more likely to appeal to Vasari's aesthetic than the calm, almost severe elements of the *Pilate* composition.

Janet Cox-Rearick looks in detail at the inner workings of this relationship.[103] She states that Pontormo did not look to Dürer only for figures but also to create works of the same subject and in the same spirit. She sees this resulting in a focus on Northern-type details and "realism" in Pontormo's works of this period. To her, this is the first time Pontormo turned his back on his past accomplishments, and made a willful separation from Michelangelo and Andrea del Sarto. In these frescoes, Pontormo reacts against any notion of physical actuality, which is linked to his attempt to avoid the ornamental. Cox-Rearick flags this as where Dürer becomes crucial for the Italian. Indeed, in figures and modelling technique, the Certosa

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101 For a discussion of Pontormo's relationship to Northern art, see: Smith, "Visdomini" and Allan Braham, "Pontormo and the Influence of Northern Art in Sixteenth-Century Italy (The Selwyn Brinton Lecture)," *Royal Society of Arts Journal* 130 (1982): 624-41 and Harbison, passim.

102 Vasari/Bull, 2:253; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:320: " ... *pensò Iacopo ... di servirsi dell'invenzioni sopradette d'Alberto Duro* ..."

103 Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 49ff.

frescoes do seem a stark contrast to the subtler palette and blended forms of Andrea del Sarto. However Pontormo's vibrant palette does retain an affinity with the strong, fully saturated hues used by Michelangelo. She also mentions the fact that Pontormo was affected by the black and white abstraction of Dürer's woodcuts, which had simplified areas of light and shade. This may have to some extent suggested to Pontormo the flattening and patterning of forms which appears in his works. Caution is certainly advisable with these comments, as Cox-Rearick is writing in general about drawings, however these comments certainly have a resonance with the painted works.

Despite this caution, there are certain ways we can relate Pontormo's painted works to the Dürer prints. First, we can look to the woodcuts, as Vasari suggests, for figural borrowing. It seems in this case that Pontormo has literally lifted some figures from the German works, and where modifications have occurred, they have been for compositional clarity, and then generally to simplify them. Some overall figural devices which appear throughout Dürer's work, such as the cellar figure and female mourner in the hilltop of the *Way to Golgotha* and the background of the *Pietà*, also originate in Dürer's work. Pontormo seems to also have looked to Dürer for ideas on compositional organisation, for example using the v-shape in the *Agony in the Garden* and *Resurrection* compositions.

Second, we can look to the woodcuts for any influence on Pontormo's use of light and shade, though this is very difficult to treat in any depth because of the loss of modelling in the Pontormo works. However, slight indications are present in the legs of the left-hand soldier in the *Resurrection* and the arm of the Veronica to support the idea that the linear quality of shadow in the woodcuts appealed to Pontormo. Again, the similarity to Rosso's technique must be noted, but an examination of the complex origins of this anti-plastic technique must continue at another time. Dürer also maintains a separation between forms using clear outer contours, especially through setting light against dark; Pontormo retains this cut out quality in his images, and then enhances it by creating the forms with clear blocks of local hue.

The most important point in relating Pontormo's work to the woodcuts, whatever Dürer's influence may be, is that Pontormo took these powerful images and contributed or added colour to them, something for which he apparently had no direction from the German images. This continues to appear as his own unique contribution and underlines his own interest in developing this area of painting. Dürer concern was not with the inherent tonality of colour, but rather with the interaction of light and dark. Pontormo used colour in the same way as Dürer used light and dark, to organise and articulate the composition, for example in the vertical rhythms of the *Pietà* and *Pilate* compositions. Tenebrism from the German is replaced by

chromaticism in the Italian work. Notably, this was the first time that Pontormo showed that level of chromatic interest.[104]

One final, brief comment in this vein should be made before concluding and that is to note the connection between Pontormo's frescoes at the Certosa and the work of Donatello. The connection here has already been mentioned in terms of the cellar figures; Irving Lavin's article underlines a few more connections, including the direct resurrection of the late-Gothic in early sixteenth-century style.[105] He compares the *Christ Before Pilate* scenes, especially in terms of composition and use of the cellar figures. In this latter element, the similarity should also be noted between Donatello and Dürer. And is it not possible that perhaps Dürer saw the pulpits on his trip to Italy early in the century and that there is a Donatello-Dürer-Pontormo lineage? Whatever the derivation may be, it seems, as Lavin states, that Pontormo used the same motif of the cellar figures but for a different end. He denied their early, naive use and employed them as a rational device, through rejecting their earlier role in creating depth, and rather placed them so as to deny space rather than to create or reinforce it.

Pontormo's borrowing of figures from earlier artists' work such as Donatello and Dürer not only helps our understanding of the startling originality of these figures, but also makes more important the new advances he has made in terms of colour usage in the Certosa frescoes. Additionally, Pontormo chose to quote figures from woodcuts and bronze reliefs, neither of which have colour as part of their expressive vocabulary. This means that whatever Pontormo has done, be it to use colours which are consistent with the subject matter or to employ them as organisers of a composition, it is he who made these colour decisions; a later use of this idea of adding colour to another's composition will appear when we discuss Pontormo's paintings after designs by Michelangelo. Rosso and Pontormo seem to have both looked at the Northern images and found something in them that resonated with their own aims, however it is the Italian who chose to add to this the emotive ability of colour. In this expressiveness as well, Pontormo seems to have taken into consideration the silent, solitary monks who would live among these images.[106]

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104 While it is doubtful that Pontormo could have seen them, Dürer's theoretical writings do contain some comments on colour. See *Literary Remains of Albrecht Dürer*, transl. William Martin Conway (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1889). Mainly, (p. 173) Dürer asserts the importance of keeping colours distinct, of the role of light and shade in doing so, that hues should not change in bright light, and he equates *cangiante* with shot silk only. If we look at his *Austrian Saints* (c. 1512-15; Bar. 116) (Fig. 105), he does seem to acknowledge tonal differences between differing local hues.

105 Irvin Lavin, "An Observation on "Medievalism" in Early Sixteenth Century Style," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 50 (1957): 113-118.

106 Allan Braham discusses in greater depth the attraction of the spiritual nature of German art to sixteenth-century Italians such as Vittoria Colonna and Michelangelo: see Braham, "Northern": 629 and 638-9.

Possibly Pontormo realised the impact these frescoes would have were they to engage the viewer as they moved throughout the cycle, and it is again to colour that he looked to aid him in making this succeed.Shearman comments on the delicate colours of compassion which infuse the entire group, and serve to enhance the expressiveness of the subject.

During his time at the Certosa, Pontormo also painted a canvas of the *Supper at Emmaus* (inscr.1525; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi) (Fig. 106), for which one payment made 4 June 1525 survives; the document cites the location of the painting as the "*dispensa*" which most authors have translated to mean the refectory.[107] Costamagna suggested that the image of the elderly monk at the upper left may represent Leonardo Buonafé, based on similarities with other portraits, including the effigy on his tomb in the chapter house.[108] As with the cloister images, Pontormo also made use of the Dürer Small Passion print of the same scene, in particular using the hat of the figure at the right and the still life laid out on the table. The addition of the Carthusian observers is Pontormo's own innovation and would have strengthened the monks' ability to identify with the scene. The palette makes an interesting contrast with the cloister frescoes, even allowing for the damage in the latter, as it involves more fully saturated hues and what we would now term primary colours. This may in part be intended to counterbalance the excessive white necessitated by the Carthusian habits. Pontormo creates a triad, with the red of the left figure, the green drape and red to yellow tunic of the figure to the right and Christ's vivid blue drape. It seems likely that some loss has been sustained by the red to yellow tunic as the modelling here is much more abrupt than in the rest of the image; however we must wait until the unveiling of the current restoration work to have this confirmed.

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107 ASF, Corporazioni religiose soppresse dal governo francese 51, n. 16, *Giornale* L, 1524-1532, 30r. published in Costamagna, *Pontormo*, 340, Doc. 4. For various reasons -- namely the Uffizi bombing and cleaning -- the canvas has been unavailable for viewing despite requests to the Opificio in Florence. It is vital to note that the brevity of these comments is based in part on them not being made from first hand viewing.

108 Costamagna, *Pontormo*, 180.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PONTORMO: SANTA FELICITÀ AND AFTER

THE CAPPONI CHAPEL IN SANTA FELICITÀ

Pontormo's altarpiece for the Capponi Chapel in Santa Felicità has aroused a great deal of scholarly attention. This scholarship has, for the most part focused on the iconography of the painting and how that relates to the reconstruction of the original appearance of the chapel as a whole. While this sort of investigation has necessitated examinations of iconographic and to some extent stylistic influences, it has meant that the formal elements of the painting, particularly colour, have been relegated to the background, usually receiving only brief and summary mention. This is due in part to the fact that the painting has certainly suffered some damage. However, one would expect, due to the extraordinary effect the colour produces and the number of very brief comments it seems to inspire, that it would have generated more concrete analyses. For the present purposes, attention will centre on the altarpiece, with the rest of the chapel decorations being mentioned where necessary and relevant. While this will not purport to be the definitive analysis of Pontormo's use of colour in this altarpiece, it is hoped that it will begin to make sense of the way in which Pontormo used colour and with what purpose. To this end, a brief look will be taken at the commission and the chapel itself, Pontormo's stylistic influences, and his own treatment of the subject matter prior to this painting before examining the colour in this work.

About the commission, Vasari writes:

> Not long after, there returned from Rome Lodovico di Gino Capponi, who had bought that chapel in Santa Felicità, on the right of the entrance into the church, which the Barbadori family had formerly arranged to be built by Filippo Brunelleschi, and he resolved to have the entire vault painted, and then to have an altarpiece prepared for it, with an ornate frame. He conferred with Niccolò Vespucci, who was a knight of Rhodes and his very close friend, as being someone who was also a friend of Jacopo and, what is more, knew the true merit and temper of that outstanding man; and he did and said so much that Lodovico commissioned the work from Pontormo. And so, having put up a barrier, which kept the chapel closed for three years, he set his hand to the work.[1]

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1 Vasari/Bull, 2:257; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:322-3: "*Non molto dopo, essendo tornato da Roma Lodovico di Gino Capponi, il quale aveva cómpero in Santa Felicità la cappella che già i*

Capponi was a Florentine banker who had lived in Rome and only returned to Florence after the death of Leo X in 1521. He bought the chapel in Santa Felicità on 22 May, 1525 from the Paghanelli family, who had taken over the chapel from the Barbadori, the original builders, in 1487.[2] In the act of endowment of the chapel, dated 1 July 1525, Lodovico provided for "a perpetual chaplaincy, for the future benefit of his soul and those of his family": he made provisions for and obliged the chaplain to perform Mass five times per week, and additionally, to see that the chapel was conserved and decorated with the altar hangings, candlesticks, and so on, provided by Capponi himself. The preamble states that the chaplaincy applies to the Blessed Virgin Annunciate, and a note in the margin says that the dedication has been changed to the *Pietà*.[3] He is buried there as are various members of his family.

The church, on the other side of the Ponte Vecchio on the way to the Palazzo Pitti, was built in the *Trecento*, and then substantially rebuilt by Ferdinando Ruggieri in 1736-39. The Barbadori family had its chapel, which sits to the right of the church entrance, designed and built by Filippo Brunelleschi in 1419-23; however it has undergone substantial changes since its original construction.[4] As a result of various reconstructions it is possible to have some sense of the original structure. The square plan chapel (each side about four metres) was capped by a dome resting on pendentives which sat, in turn on four arches, the north and east of which open into the church. This original design would have been much lighter in feel, and additionally, would have rendered the paintings more visible and equally more comprehensible to the viewer, as an interactive unit, as he or she moved around the church. At present, unless one gains access to the chapel, the paintings are difficult to comprehend other than as wall paintings seen through narrow openings. The original interaction of the paintings, which will be discussed later in the chapter, has been

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Barbadori feciono fare a Filippo di ser Brunellesco all'entrare in chiesa a man ritta, si risolvé di far dipingere tutta la volta e poi farvi una tavola con ricco ornamento. Onde, avendo ciò conferito con messer Niccolò Vespucci cavaliere di Rodi, il quale era suo amicissimo, il cavaliere, come quelli che era amico anco di Iacopo e davantaggio conosceva la virtù e valore di quel valentuomo, fece e disse tanto, che Lodovico allogò quell'opera al Puntormo."

2 John Shearman, *Pontormo's Altarpiece in S. Felicità* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1971), 1-4.

3 Shearman, *Felicità*, 4.

4 Howard Saalman, "Form and Meaning at the Barbadori-Capponi Chapel in S. Felicità," *Burlington Magazine* 131 (1989): 535; for an expanded treatment of the chapel including new information on the details of the Barbadori involvment, see: Howard Saalman, *Filippo Brunelleschi: The Buildings* (London: Zwemmer, 1993). See also: J. Wasserman, "The Barbadori Chapel in Santa Felicità," *Papers in Art History from the Pennsylvania State University*, Vol. 8, *Essays in Architectural History Presented to H. Hager on his Sixty-Sixth Birthday*, ed. H.A. Millon and S.S. Munshower, (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press), 25ff.

made quite difficult for the modern viewer to comprehend as a result of the architectural alterations.[5]

Vasari describes Pontormo's altarpiece (Fig. 107) as "*un Cristo morto deposto di croce, il quale è portato alla sepoltura*," Christ being taken away from the Virgin and carried towards the tomb.[6] The basic points of the debate regarding the iconography of the work concern whether the body of Christ is in the process of being raised or lowered, and the possible influences of Raphael's *Borghese Entombment* (1507; Rome: Galleria Borghese) (Fig. 108) and the Meleager sarcophagus reliefs.[7] Shearman also introduced the idea of the action taking place across the chapel, thereby integrating dome, *Annunciation* fresco, and altarpiece.[8] Numerous *pentimenti* in the Christ Church squared compositional study (Oxford: Christ Church Picture Gallery, F68) (Fig. 113), particularly in the area of Christ's body and the supporting figure to the left, indicate that Pontormo struggled with the details of that physical arrangement throughout the work on the composition.[9]

In his *Borghese Entombment* of 1507, Raphael reintroduced the simple iconographic precedent for this scene, the Bearing of the Body which Pontormo then picked up and made more complex in 1525. In the Passion narrative, this scene falls after the Deposition from the Cross and before the Lamentation/Pietà, Christ on the Stone of Unction, and the Entombment. The Deposition generally appears as a

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5 For more on the alterations to the church, see: Shearman, *Felicità*, 4 citing G. Balocchi, *Illustrazione dell I. & R. Chiesa Parrochiale di S. Felicità* (1828), 34, on Capponi's rebuilding of the chapel, and the possible alteration of the dome and pendentives. A long debate ensues in the literature about the appearance of the original Brunelleschi ceiling and when exactly the present dome was built, with Saalman presenting the most credible argument, that the original dome was indeed hemispherical and that this is the shape for which Pontormo conceived his figures; see Saalman, "Form": 534-5; Leo Steinberg, "Pontormo's Capponi Chapel," *Art Bulletin* 56 (1974): 385, n. 3 and Shearman, *Felicità* 5. On the dating of the dome, see Steinberg, 385, n. 3. For the document discussing the destruction of the dome, see Costamagna, *Pontormo*, 183 who cites: F. Fiorella Malesci, *La Chiesa di Santa Felicità a Firenze* (Florence, 1986), 205 & 208, n. 7. On the addition of the Vasari corridor and the seventeenth and eighteenth century alterations see Shearman, *Felicità*, 4.

6 On the subject of the Bearing of the Body of Christ, see: Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, 2 vols., transl. Janet Seligman, (London: Lund Humfries, 1972), 2:168-173; included in this discussion are the precedents from c. 1000 a.d. onwards; see also Mary Ann Graeve, "The Stone of Unction in Caravaggio's Painting for the Chiesa Nuova," *Art Bulletin* 40 (1958): 223ff.

7 Shearman, *Felicità*, 1-30; Steinberg, 385-99.

8 This idea is in fact, not new to Pontormo. Shearman himself outlines Raphael's use of this same device in the Chigi Chapel in Sta. Maria del Popolo. See John Shearman, "The Chigi Chapel in S. Maria del Popolo," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 24 (1961): 129 - 60. It is possible, if we accept Cox-Rearick's proposal that Pontormo travelled to Rome, c. 1519, that he would have seen this chapel.

9 The drawing also shows a sketch of ladder and face at the top of the composition, later replaced by a cloud, indicating a move from greater to lesser specificity in terms of time and location.

specific, narrative event, most often including some indication of the cross as well as of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. The Entombment is also generally depicted as a narrative, a specific moment in time that includes the tomb and mourners. It is in the events between these two that aspect is of time, location, and narrative become more complicated. The Bearing of the Body concerns Christ's body being carried towards the tomb and usually surrounded by a cortege of supporters and mourners; this scene places emphasis on the body of Christ and on Christ himself. The Lamentation, which is seen as a halt during the Bearing of the Body, focuses attention on the Virgin and her mourning for and separation from her son and is dealt with as a devotional image for meditation rather than a narrative scene.

Charles Hope explored this distinction thoroughly, indicating that an image which we would perhaps interpret as a narrative, or *storia*, would during the Renaissance, be seen as an iconic image of sacred personages rather than a picture which told a story.[10] He cites that narrative images would still frequently be described as images of "Our Lady". In the case of the Santa Felicità altarpiece, Vasari's description which stresses the movement and passage of time in the work indicates that at this point at last the way in which works were preceived may be changing. The almost strictly devotional nature of the Pietà separates it from the rest of the more narrative scenes, placing emphasis solely on the Virgin and Christ. Iconographically, the Bearing of the Body, the Lamentation, and particularly the Pietà take on an increasingly timeless, meditative element as artists develop the possibilities of these scenes. From the fourteenth century onwards, the influence of the Byzantine Lamentation and the Anointing of the Body or Christ on the Stone of Unction increased as the custom of venerating the body increased in the west.[11] It is at this time that images such as the Fra Angelico *Entombment* (c. 1438-40; Munich: Alte Pinakothek) (Fig. 109) and the Rogier van der Weyden *Last Farewell* (Florence: Uffizi) appear. Although these scenes can be placed in time due to their association with the tomb, the way in which the body on Pontormo's work is presented as an offering without movement, unobstructed by any other forms and presented to us by attendants, give the image a contemplative, meditative quality. The sense is that the body is being presented for our meditation, rather than acting as one aspect of a narrative scene.[12]

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10 On the difference between altarpieces being images of sacred people rather than narratives, see: Charles Hope, "Altarpieces and the Requirements of Patrons," in *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and religious imagination in the Quattrocento*, eds. Timothy Verdon and John Henderson, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press), 535-571.

11 Schiller, 171.

12 The connection of the attendants holding up the body with the priest holding up the host would be particularly resonant in a funerary chapel. On the connections of these themes with the Theatine order, see Costamagna, *Pontormo*, 189ff. On the visionary nature of Santa Felicità altarpiece and connection with Carthusian spirituality, see: Moreno, "Carthusians": 60.

Pontormo had the opportunity to explore this subject repeatedly prior to his largest example in Santa Felicità. Vasari tells us of his work on the predella for Andrea's *San Gallo Annunciation*; additionally there is the predella showing a *Pietà with Saints* (Dublin: National Gallery) (Fig. 111), although this has generally been rejected as a work by Pontormo. Sometime around 1517, Pontormo received the commission for a "Dead Christ, Our Lady weeping and two putti" for the garden of San Gallo, although this work has been lost.[13] A further drawing (Florence, Uffizi 300 Fr; Cox-Rearick, cat. 103) (Fig. 112) receives no mention in Vasari but has been suggested to be a study for the lunette top of the San Michele altarpiece.[14] Between Poggio a Caiano and the Certosa, Vasari makes mention of a *Pietà* and angels done for the merchants of Ragusa, which included a landscape taken from Dürer.[15] And finally just before the Capponi altarpiece Pontormo painted the Certosa *Pietà*. Throughout these works we see a gradual increaese in movement, and sophistication of composition; the Uffizi drawing shows early exploration of some of the main features of the Santa Felicità composition, including: the compositional caesura created by the parting of Christ and the Virgin; the use of the turning torso taken from Michelangelo's Doni Tondo or the Libyan Sibyl; the piling of figures on the right side of the composition; and the use of a supporting figure to lift up Christ's body.

When dealing with the Capponi chapel, the *Annunciation* fresco (Fig. 110) and dome frescoes must not be forgotten; while the latter present many more difficulties in reconstruction, the former has yielded some of the more interesting information with regards the entire chapel complex, and most importantly the linking of the Capponi chapel entrance wall Annunciation with similar approaches in the earlier Santa Maria Novella, Ognissanti, and San Marco.[16] Obvious reasons such as churches wanting to harness the potential power of the Annunziata image account in some way for this, but we must also remember Pontormo's work at the Annunziata himself, and his sensitive nature. It is likely that an image which exerted such a strong influence during that period, would have created an impression on the young artist that remained with him until he was given a commission for a chapel with a former dedication to the Virgin.[17] Saalman discusses at length the idea of the Barbadori-Capponi chapel as "*Annunciation*" sanctuary, citing miracles which happened at Santa Felicità and in the Brunelleschi incarnation it is likely that the altar faced the entrance wall, as all other Florentine entrance *Annunciations* did.[18] The

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13 Vasari/Bull, 2:248; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:316: "... *un Cristo morto, una Nostra Donna che piangeva e due putti in aria* ..." On the date, see Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 140.

14 See Freedberg, *Renaissance*, 1:533-4.

15 Vasari/Bull, 2:252; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:319.

16 See Saalman, *Buildings*, 97 and Shearman, *Felicità*, 8-10.

17 On the dedication to the Virgin, see Saalman, *Buildings*, 97.

18 See Saalman, *Buildings*, 98.

implications of the connections, made throughout the chapel, between the image of the Annunciation, of the parting of Mother and Son, of the Evangelists -- literal and physical links between our world and the world of the chapel -- and of God the Father and the Patriarchs, must be kept in mind in later discussions regarding colour use throughout the chapel. Presumably some balance between theology, artist's practice and patron's requirements came together by the mid-1520s to create this complex situation for the subject.

The question of how and to what ends Pontormo used colour in the altarpiece in the Capponi chapel perhaps causes the most confusion and the most elusive comments. It is not surprising that it has frequently been found difficult to discuss or assess, as the painting apparently has undergone a variety of restorations during its existence. Shearman cites a variety of accounts of a "disastrous restoration," ordered by Ferrante Capponi, "in 1722 when, as one of these puts it, 'through the incompetence of the restorer it lost the brilliance of the finest colours.'"[19] The potential of any damage to the painting is distressing given Vasari's comments that:

> ...for, intending to do original things, he executed it (the altarpiece) without shadows and with colouring so bright and uniform that one can scarcely distinguish the lights from the mid-tones and the mid-tones from the dark.[20]

It is quite easy to imagine this panel being "without shadows", and indeed it is difficult to distinguish any areas which would be dark or light, yet it does seem clear from the physical and written evidence that the painting has suffered damage.[21] The painting underwent at least two restorations, first, the 1722 cleaning, and a second, in 1935.[22] Unfortunately, the brief report on the 1935 cleaning gives no technical or even specific information about the cleaning, and merely states that the previously dirty painting is now visible "*nella splendida gemma di chiari colori.*"[23] Shearman cites as evidence of these the sandals of the supporting figure which are now white in the shadows and red in the highlights, and the clear loss in the robe of the Magdalene;

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19 Shearman, *Felicità*, 26 quoting Balocchi, 41; on Ferrante Capponi's involvement, see Costamagna, *Pontormo*, 183.

20 Vasari/Bull, 2:257-8; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:323: "... *perciò che, pensando a nuove cose, la condusse senz'ombre e con un colorito chiaro e tanto unito, che a pena si conosce il lume dal mezzo et il mezzo dagli scuri.*

21 For a discussion of a Savonarolan connection to the idea of "without shadows" see: Patricia Rubin, "Color": 185.

22 On the first cleaning, see Balocchi, 34ff, and Bottari, quoted by Ugo Procacci, "Di un scritto di G. Bottari sulla conservazione e il restauro delle opere d'arte," *Rivista d'arte* 30 (1955): 246 as cited in Shearman, *Felicità*, n. 29. On the second, see Ugo Procacci, "Restauri a Dipinti della Toscana," *Bollettino d'Arte* 39 (1935-6): 380-1. Shearman, "Developments," 272-3 unaccountably refers to this as the 1930 cleaning and says that the painting must have required a great deal of repainting afterwards.

23 Procacci, "Toscana": 380.

he reconstructs her drapery as having been done in red to yellow *cangiante* because of an "f" visible on the gesso which he tentatively asserts was for *fuocoso*; Pontormo's energetic underdrawing shows through in every area of this figure's drapery.[24] These scant reports and the physical evidence would certainly help to account for the overall bleached quality of the work. The drapery of the figure floating over the Virgin's head may be another area of damage. Some loss has certainly been sustained in the red drapery, but also there looks to be (again observed with binoculars) some loss in the dark areas of the green tunic which has no depth of saturated shadow. The drapery of the supporting figure also appears surprisingly lit, considering that it should logistically be blocked from the strong light by Christ's torso, and if blocked and therefore darker, would set off Christ's form. In contrast, the areas of blue and true pink seem in particularly good condition, so the damage does not seem as extensive as Shearman would have us believe. Unfortunately, the only way to determine the real extent of the loss would be for the painting to be taken down from its mounting. The main point, however, is that clearly, as with Rosso's Volterra *Deposition*, we are working with a "skinned" work at least in some areas and therefore must exercise caution when discussing modelling, colour composition, etc.

The light in the altarpiece falls decisively from the right, from the same source, at least theoretically, as the real light in the chapel. The current window replaced the original stained glass window sometime in this century and after the writing of Shearman's article; the photograph in his article reproduces the stained glass insert, whereas the current window is merely pane glass.[25] For the moment, it is important to remark that the light which fell into the chapel would have been coloured and perhaps therefore enhanced the gemlike effect of the colours in the panel painting. As Vasari implied in stating that the panel was "without shadows", the painting is devoid of any shrouding *chiaroscuro*. Pontormo has described every form in the greatest detail; only the area behind Christ's hand could be considered relatively dark, where a patch of dark blue paint sets off the interplay of the three hands. Theoretically, the red drape of the figure behind should show through; in this instance at least, Pontormo

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24 Shearman, *Felicità*, n. 30; Shearman, "Developments," 273. This letter was not visible with binoculars, however the panel is very difficult to view because of the glare off the varnish, and I believe Shearman saw it down for the Pontormo *Mostra* in 1956 and therefore has had a much better view. The red in both cases may have been a red lake pigment, which, in addition to fading over time which may have contributed to the problems with the Magdalene's drapery, may have been more susceptible to erosion during cleaning as it is applied in thin layers. This sort of speculation, however, has limited application unless it can be backed up with a close-up examination of the paint surface.

25 Shearman and Steinberg both cite the subject of the scene in the window as the *Entombment*, Shearman being puzzled by its repetition of the subject in the altar while Steinberg feels that his new iconography alleviates this problem. For a colour photomontage of the stained glass window in its original location see Jean-Claude Lebensztejn, *Jacopo da Pontormo* (Paris: Editions Aldines, 1992).

has kept control over the light and colour to the extent that situations which physically should be a certain way are now manipulated for a formal effect, again asserting the importance he places on light and colour. Furthermore, Pontormo makes clear to us that he has carefully observed light; none of the effects in the work appear as accidental in any way but all clearly derive from close looking and recording of phenomena. The fall of light has varying affects in the painting; in some areas -- and again it should be remembered that this is greater than would have originally appeared due to the condition -- where it falls on an area of drapery under half-shadow such as the Virgin's cuffs, it brings out a fairly saturated version of the hue. More generally, however, where it falls directly on an object, it bleaches the colour to a very pale tonality.

While to some extent this bleached impression derives from the condition of the painting, there are certainly areas where it was intentionally created: for example, blue areas, such as the whole swath of blue draperies at the level of the Virgin, where Pontormo could achieve a greater range of tonality with white. As he started with a mid-tone of blue, the amount of white necessary for a full range of modelling gives even these areas a bleached appearance. In areas with a local hue which did not allow a wide enough range of tonality for modelling, Pontormo either broke the tonal unity of the work by simply painting shadows which were not as saturated, such as the pink headcloths and the yellow left cuff of the Magdalene -- although there is some level of loss in those areas -- or used *cangiante* as in the tight pink to blue tunic of the crouching figure. This latter technique was perhaps also used in the green tunic of the floating figure; the drapery was possibly green to pale yellow, as in the green roll of drapery at the base of the painting although the rather odd nature of the modelling in this passage suggests perhaps more that there has been some sort of physical alteration or fading in the highlights.[26] This intense light makes strong patches of bright light (white) and cast shadow throughout the painting, which Pontormo then used to break up the logical coherence of forms. For example, the drapery surrounding the Virgin seems more as patches of dark blue and white light than as a piece of cloth which encloses arms, legs, stomach, or equally the piece of cloth at the neck of the crouching figure, where Pontormo used a bright stream of light to pick out one area, leaving the rest in darkness, which confuses rather than clarifies our understanding of this area of the work. Everything chromatically which happens in this work originates in this light. It does seem however, that Pontormo did not use

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26 Possibly both green areas were done with malachite, a granular, weak green which Cennino suggests should be highlighted with the yellow pigment giallorino, although in this case, the fugitive yellow lake may have been used, contributing to the loss in this area. see Cennini, *Handbook*, 28-32.

this light to pick out areas of compositional or iconographic importance, but rather to create a general effect of brilliance and chromatic virtuosity.[27]

As revealed fairly clearly in the discussion on light, Pontormo chose to model his figures using the pure colour modelling of the Florentine tradition, yet he benefited from the late fifteenth-century explorations of the behaviour of light and colour which informs his modelling technique. One of the factors which characterise this period, generally considered as Pontormo's mature style, is a resurgence of Pontormo's interest in classicism and, with this, a readmittance of the influences of Leonardo, Raphael, and Michelangelo;[28] and yet, Pontormo uses these sources not only as classical precedents as before, but as parameters within which he can continue to make innovations along the lines of the Mannerist style. Clearly the cleaned results of both the Sistine Ceiling and the Doni Tondo show that Pontormo and Michelangelo shared similar interest in the modelling of forms. However this is something which will be more fruitfully discussed at a later point.

Returning to the altarpiece itself, Pontormo has chosen a fairly broad palette, but used fairly consistent ranges within each hue. Blue, pink, green, yellow, red and brown make up the main hues, yet the initial impression is one of blues and pinks, moderated by brief touches of yellow and green. In the upper and lower areas, blue and pink switch roles as highlight and local hue: for example in the tight tunic of the crouching figure and the headdress of the woman at the apex of the composition. The brown of the portrait figure at the right escapes our attention until quite late in the examination. Surely this initial impression should be moderated by the knowledge that the right side of the painting, and indeed the entire foreground would have contained more red, and possibly yellow were the draperies of the Magdalene figure in their original condition. Despite this, Pontormo continually relied on white as the hue for highlights, giving the painting its almost over-lit appearance. The light falls softly and smoothly on Christ, the only nude figure who becomes, almost by negation of the rest of the brightly coloured composition, a highpoint. Pontormo placed the emphasis on Christ as he is the only nude form; even figures where he wants to show his ability to "model" nudes -- as he has shown in the drawings -- have been dressed in tight tunics to colour them and to make them contrast with Christ. This

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27 Emil Maurer, "Zum Kolorit von Pontormos "Deposizione"," from *Farbe und Farben: Albert Knoepfli zum 70 Geburtsdag, (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Denkmalpflege am der Eidgenössischen Technischen Hockschule, Zürich)* (Zürich: Manesse Verlag, 1980): 316. I am grateful to Dr. Matthew Rampley for assistance in translating this article. Maurer makes the point concerning colour as a phenomenon of light in the context of arguing that the Pontormo altarpiece portrays a Mannerist "idea", universal and objective as opposed to having any relationship with a specific event whether it be within or without the painting. However he fails to take into account the condition of the work in his analysis.

28 Cox-Rearick, *Drawings*, 260.

technique, which appears in the compositional study as well, should not be underestimated. First, it shows a concrete knowledge of Michelangelo's use of a similar method in figures such as the *Eleazar and Matthan* lunette and many of the images of God the Father in the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Michelangelo still denotes these areas of tight hue as fabric by representing small wrinkles. Pontormo seems to have adopted a similar technique, while blurring the area between hue and fabric, allowing him to display not only his brilliance at colouring, but also his ability to imitate Michelangelo's adeptly modelled and muscular bodies. Each hue also seems to be created with the same pigment, save the two varieties of blue, one more chalky than the other; for example, the pinks, yellows, greens etc. are consistent and repeated throughout the composition, giving the painting a simplified overall sense of continuity. This carries through to the colour composition, which unifies rather than confuses the painting.

Pontormo's composition of the figures receives frequent comment, particularly due to the floating nature of the arrangement. The figural crowding and faces certainly betray Pontormo's style; however certain aspects also derrive from other sources, namely Northern art. The strongest link is with Dürer's woodcuts, especially the *Lamentation* of the Large Woodcut Passion (Bar. 12). Craig Harbison has also added Hans Baldung to Pontormo's influences.[29] The female mourning figures from the Dürer woodcut, with veils bound close to their foreheads appear throughout the German's prints; Pontormo's use of these figures goes beyond mere quotation. One specific example is the similarity between the two women at the apex of each composition. Pontormo has not only mimicked the dress of the figure, and the fold of drapery she holds in front of her stomach, but also the compositional role of that figure. Pontormo also seems to have adapted on a less literal level the vertical piling of figures and floating nature of the German composition. While difficult to account for within the Italian tradition which emphasised narrative, "real" aspects of the representation, this overlapping of figures to suggest spatial depth seems to be the norm in Northern treatments of this subject. The woman at the top of Dürer's work -- it does seem more correct to say top rather than back -- stands more upon the other figures rather than behind them, much as does the Pontormo equal. The same action is even more noticeable in the Dürer painting of the same subject. Here the Christ and Virgin group remain in the same position, the compositional piling becomes even more pronounced, and John the Evangelist replaces the woman at the top. Furthermore, Dürer increased the instability of his composition by resting the group not on Christ's body, which sits stably on the bottom of the woodcut, but basing it on

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29 See Criag Harbison, "Pontormo, Baldung and the Early Reformation," *Art Bulletin* 66 (June 1984): 324-7.

one point of a curved drapery, as does Pontormo in his altarpiece; the composition thus slips in much the same way as the *Pietà* of the Certosa frescoes. This same drapery, together with the circle of head in the lower right of the woodcut suggests some of the circular compositional elements of the Pontormo work, such as the circle of head which surrounds Christ and the Virgin.[30]

Pontormo used colour to enliven and reinforece this unusual and dramatic composition. Although extreme caution must be exercised in discussing the colour composition in this work because of the condition, it certainly seems that Pontormo used unity in colour as the organising principle of his colour composition. He dressed the central figures, in blue draperies, either entirely as in the case of the Madonna, or at least mostly blue. The edges of the composition, in contrast, are ringed by a tenuous "band" of red beginning with a strong note in the Magdalene's robe, and following anti-clockwise round the drapery around the floating figure, led around the top by the downward pointing arm of the woman at the top of the composition, and back to the bottom through the supporting figure's drapery to the red shadows in the crouching figure.[31] Moshe Barasch's identification of red as a liturgical colour associated with the Passion should be mentioned; however, extreme care must be taken when attempting to link these sorts of traditions with painted images.[32] The unique blocks of colour -- yellow and green -- respect the axis of the work as well as the top and bottom, putting equal emphasis on these peripheral figures in contrast to the focus put on the main protagonists by the simplicity of their drapery. The paler, chalkier blue in the tunic of the supporting figure, which reappears in the Virgin's tunic, creates a resonance across Christ's body. Green leads us into the composition via the ground drapery and then moves us through repetition to the top of the composition, where the pose of the figure points us back down. Despite the overall simplicity, Pontormo shows in certain areas an interest in beautiful displays or pairings of colours, as in the juxtaposition of red, yellow, and blue behind the back of the crouching figure, and the lovely *cangiante* areas in that same figure and possibly in the Magdalene. The red circle surrounding the figures would certainly resonate with the red robes of the Virgin and Angel Annunciate on the fresco wall creating a strong colouristic link

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30 A similar apporach appears in a series of images of the Descent from the Cross by Rogier van der Weyden, such as the copy of the now lost Descent from the Cross in the Cabinet des Dessins, Louvre, illustrated in Max J. Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting* (Leiden: A.W.S. Sijthoff, 1967), vol. 2, *Rogier van der Weyden and the Master of Flemalle*, pl. 110, 94a and in the Descent from the Cross in the Prado, Madrid. I am grateful to Prof. Martin Kemp for pointing out this connection.

31 Pontormo uses this same sort of compositional surrounding by a colour in the closely proximate *Madonna and Child with St. John*, c. 1527-8; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi) in which a red drape illogically surrounds the back and heads of the three figures.

32 See Moshe Barasch, "Renaissance Colour Conventions: Liturgy, Humanism, Workshop," in Marcia B. Hall, ed., *Color & Technique in Renaissance Painting: Italy and the North* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

between the images, which would further enhance the connection established with the Virgin's glance. This connection would be even stronger when all the paintings were visible and viewed as one ensemble, as would have been possible with the original chapel structure with thinner columns.

In addition to the system of colouration which Pontormo used in the altarpiece, Vasari suggests that one system operates in the dome and tondi and another in the fresco figures. He writes:

> And in the works which Jacopo carried out up to this point in the above-mentioned chapel [the vault and four evangelists], it seemed almost as if he had returned to his early style; but he did not do so in painting the altarpiece ... In short, the composition of this panel is utterly different from the figures on the vaulting, and likewise the colouring.[33]

Saalman when making this point, suggests a possible meaning that could be attached to this: that Pontormo used different styles of colouring and light to distinguish between the heavenly sphere of the vaulting, the earthly sphere of the annunciation and the Virgin's vision in the altarpiece.[34] Vasari tells us that the dome colouring was in Pontormo's old style and quite different from the altar; whether this means the figures would have been dark and shrouded, as are the Evangelists when compared with the altar, and as in the Visdomini altarpiece, or whether they would have been blocklike and simple as in the more recent Certosa works we cannot know.[35] Certainly the difference between the "contorted (*stravolte*)" -- but contorted according to their function in the work -- *Annunciation* figures and the altarpiece is one of purity of hue and intensity of light with regards to modelling, rather than any dramatic difference in overall lighting or palette choice. The light in the former work differs from the latter in that it definitely, with no allowances for condition necessary, bleaches the colours to white; the intensity of the shadows remains about the same, but the amount of added white in the highlights has increased. The Evangelists have not figured into this analysis up to now, and yet their colouring singles them and their role out quite emphatically. That they have been clothed in dark, earthy and earthly hues and that they peer out of porthole-like frames single them out. This fulfills a threefold purpose: first, the colours and the frames denote them as earthly observers, watching the scenes and events and preparing to record them; second, colour in particular separates these relatively worldly figures from the more brilliantly hued divine figures

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33 Vasari/Bull, 2:258; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:323: "*Nelle quali opere, che insin qui fece Iacopo in detta cappella, parve quasi che fusse tornato alla sua maniera di prima; ma non seguitò il medesimo nel fare la tavola ... Insomma il componimento di questa tavola è diverso affatto dalle figure delle volte, e simile il colorito.*"

34 Saalman, "Form": 538, n. 38.

35 On Pontormo's preparations for the dome, see: Janet Cox [Rearick], "Pontormo's Drawings for the Destroyed Vault of the Capponi Chapel," *Burlington Magazine* 98 (1956): 17ff.

in the lower and upper scenes; third, this in turn marks these figures as intermediaries between the viewers and the painted figures, the direct, emotion-filled stare of St. Matthew out at the spectator being a prime example.[36] It is important that Pontormo chose to make these distinctions between the different realms and equally chose to make them with colour.

One of the ways in which the composition of the altarpiece and of the chapel as a whole, in both formal and colouristic terms, becomes more comprehensible is when it is viewed from an oblique angle -- that is from the aisle of the chapel, from the left.[37] We must remember that the altarpiece still needed to work head on in relation to ceremonies on its own altar. From the more oblique viewpoint, given the original architecture of the chapel and therefore the narrower pier, the whole altarpiece and the *Annunciation* would have been visible at once, whereas now the wider pier blocks the view of the right half of the altarpiece. The viewing point which seems most beneficial is approximately three metres from the nave wall, and 3.20 metres from the pilaster. From this point, the Magdalene's turn towards the Virgin becomes more convincing and the space between these two figures opens up much more; we see more into the Virgin's lap rather than seeing her as a flat figure. The head of the woman appears at the apex of the lunette shape rather than slightly off-centre as it does when viewed head on. The red surrounding ring also becomes more prevalent from this viewpoint, enhancing the rotational feel of the formal composition. In terms of the chapel as a whole, the Virgin Annunciate's look towards the body of her son in the altarpiece becomes even more powerful. The iconographic unity of the programme, where the entire chapel is intended to interact as a whole, as with the Chigi Chapel, gives this sort of viewing a further meaning and purpose beyond merely a formal one. The true extent of the optical adjustments which occur is difficult to define, as we cannot share in the original view due to the architectural changes, particularly the widening of the northeast pier and extension of the north wall. However a few points as to Pontormo's reasons for making these alterations may still be made.[38] First, the chapel would be visible from most areas in the church, upon entering when the altarpiece would dominate your view of the chapel, but then also when exiting up the nave aisle. Second, from latter exit vantage point we would

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36 Shearman has suggested a reconstruction of the Evangelist's original placement in which St. Matthew looks at the spectator, St. John at the Virgin Annunciate, St. Luke at God the Father and St. Mark at Christ; see Shearman, *Felicità*, 21 where he places St. Luke in the corner against the facade of the church, St. Mark over the pier, St. John on the left of the altarpiece and St. Matthew to the right of the altarpiece.

37 I am, again, thankful to Prof. Martin Kemp for this observation, made *in situ*.

38 The pier would have originally been approximately 760 cm by 760 cm, and is now approximately 995 cm by 995 cm. The east wall extension narrowed the east arch opening by approximately 1.38 metres. Figures taken from Fontono's reconstruction published in Shearman, *Felicità*, 7.

be able to view the entire lower chapel programme in its entirety, which becomes more difficult upon entering the church; from here the iconographic connection between the *Annunciation* and the *Deposition* is strengthened as the younger Virgin in the fresco looks over her shoulder not only at the Angel Gabriel, but also at the altarpiece, the conclusion of the saga which begins in the fresco. Sadly, the full programme cannot be fully understood as such because of the absence of the dome frescoes.

Unfortunately, the condition of the altarpiece and the chapel as a whole makes difficult any sort of overall, definitive conclusions as to the inner workings of the colour in the Capponi chapel. Because the dome has been destroyed, the altarpiece over cleaned and the structure of the chapel radically altered, the chapel we are able to see is not entirely the one in which Pontormo worked, nor that which he created. We have been left with a clear trail of iconographic and stylistic influences, fairly good records of his works up to this time, an adequate body of drawings and we have an extensive discussion by Vasari about the altarpiece itself. These factors make possible some conclusions about the altarpiece and about the chapel as a whole.

Firstly, it seems that Pontormo drew on a variety of iconographic and stylistic influences, most particularly Raphael's *Borghese Entombment* and the work of Northern artists such as Rogier van der Weyden and Albrecht Dürer, to create an image which stressed both the Virgin and Christ as protagonists in a scene of final separation. The scene emphasises Christ's body having been taken from the cross and being transferred to the tomb, equated in this instance with the altar. The Virgin remains conscious of this final separation, yet falls back from grief. Clearly, Pontormo has looked to Northern images to give this scene an almost otherworldly, abstract sense, and at the same time to emphasise the pathos and grief felt by all the participants. His own work up to this point showed an interest in this sort of depiction, in contrast to the more typical Italian representation of the scene as a narrative event. He consistently chose options which would allow him to create a visionary, non-naturalistic and non-narrative image, placing emphasis on Christ's body and the Virgin.

More importantly, Pontormo seems to have continually turned to colour to emphasise the points he wishes to make in the composition, and in the chapel as a whole. The heightened colour, fully saturated in most of the shadows, with little use of black, increases the emotional level in the work and emphasises those feelings inherent in the subject matter. Pontormo has organised colour on the principles of unity, simplicity, and repetition but with a sensibility to restricted areas of beautiful juxtapositions. With this, he emphasises the main protagonists in the altarpiece, and draws all attention ultimately back to the Virgin and especially to Christ. The way in

which colour functions within the altarpiece is analogous to the way in which it functions throughout the chapel. Repetitions of hues, red for example, organise the separate images and create links between them which strengthen the overall coherence of the programme.

LATE WORKS

In Pontormo's late career, colour analysis becomes particularly difficult. Of the three showpiece fresco commissions, none have survived; works on panel have suffered less, but the increase in portraiture, with the differing colour agenda from that type of work, and the decrease in panel production for the duration of each fresco commission mean that we have less evidence than we would perhaps like. The real tragedy is the loss of the great fresco cycle at San Lorenzo, which, when we take into consideration the way in which Pontormo's colour style developed with the works we do know, must have been an overwhelming accomplishment. On the other hand, during this period we have the interesting contact between Michelangelo and Pontormo, which becomes more concrete with Pontormo's painting after the older artist's drawings. Additionally, what colour evidence we do have shows distinct changes in style, such that the losses become even more disappointing. We can only comment on what we have and reconstruct as best as possible what his colour style during the last twenty five years of his life would have been.

A distinct change in approach to colour happens between the Santa Felicità chapel and the next large scale work by Pontormo, the *Visitation* (c. 1528; Carmignano: San Michele) (Fig. 114).[39] There has not yet been a solidly convincing proposal for the original location of the altarpiece; it has generally been accepted to have been executed for a private chapel in the Villa Pinadori. Additionally, we lack any technical information which would help in understanding the physical nature of the change in colour style.

For the pose and scale of the women, as has frequently been pointed out, Pontormo had recourse yet again to Dürer's prints, this time to the series of scenes from the life of the Virgin, in particular the *Visitation* (Bar. 78), and to the engraving of the *Four Witches*. Dürer's *Visitation* print may also have suggested to Pontormo the framing, at least on one side, of the women by a massive wall with an arched opening, which the Italian then developed into his closely confined placement of the figures between wall and gate. He emphasised the eccentricity of this view by making the scale of the figures to the left wall and to the tiny figures at its base, particularly unusual.

With the possible exception of the Santa Felicità altarpiece, colour in the Carmignano *Visitation* makes perhaps the strongest statement of all of Pontormo's

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39 For a lengthy summary of the various opinions regarding the date, see Costamagna, *Pontormo*, 196. On the church see: Maria Grazia Trenti Antonelli, *La Chiesa di S. Michele a Carmignano* (Prato, 1990) and Mariano Apa, *Pontormo: La "Visitazione" a Carmignano* (Carmignano-Florence: Comume di Carmignano, 1984).

altarpieces. In this oil painting Pontormo used combinations of tonal values and saturation levels that make for an extremely arresting image. The light, which we must assume would have fallen from the left based on the shadows, creates even modelling in the two figures on the left while simultaneously spotlighting the figure of Elizabeth. As in some of his earlier works, such as the Visdomini altarpiece, Pontormo kept the background in relatively dim, neutral light so that the brightly lit figures in the foreground stand out even more. Certain areas such as Elizabeth's legs and the Virgin's headscarf, and face show very carefully observed and worked out areas of light and shade, clearly betraying a concern with reflected light and shadow. For example, if we compare the nape of the Virgin's neck with the tone of her face we see that Pontormo was concerned with showing the difference not only in tone but virtually in hue between these two areas. Yet even in areas which should be in darkest shadow -- for example the area under all four figures' feet -- Pontormo took great care to ensure that the hues remain legible and true to the lighting conditions. Furthermore, he showed little concern with the relative differences in tone between, for example, the two left-hand figures' pink and blue drapes.

The monochrome, tonally dark blue of the Virgin's robe made for a daring contrast between the main two figures, setting each one off in their own right. Elizabeth appears unique because of her own local hue; however we read the colour around the Virgin as her blue plus the pink of the figure standing behind her. In comparison with the Santa Felicità altarpiece Pontormo returned here to more simple blocks of unique local hues, rather than the complex panoply of scarves and arms we find in the earlier work. For Carmignano he consistently used colour modelling, with the only possible diversion being the Virgin's blue robe. In Elizabeth's robe, the painter used colour modelling for most of the robe, whereas in the spotlit area on her hip he resorted to hue change, green to yellow, to denote the patch of bright light there. None of these exist as clear changes in Pontormo's approach to colour, but the clear increase in saturation level and simplification of palette and colour composition indicate a more straightforward approach here than in earlier images.

We notice a similar colour use in Pontormo's other largescale altarpiece from this period, the *Madonna and Child with Sts. Anne, Peter, Sebastian, Benedict, and the Good Thief or St. Philip* (c. 1529; Paris: Louvre) (Fig. 115). Gonfaloniere Niccolò Capponi likely recommended Pontormo to the Signoria for the commission.[40] Pontormo used a variety of approaches to colour when creating the

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40 Ibid., cat. 62, 204ff. It seems relevant to comment that the painting's high place on the wall in the Louvre makes it very difficult to analyse the condition of the painting or the paint surface. On the Signoria's involvement, see Costamagna, *Pontormo*, 204 who refers to J. Wasserman, ""La Vergine e Cristo con Sant'Anna" del Pontormo," in *Kunst des Cinquecento in der Toskana* (Acts of the Congress in Honour of Sylvie Béguin, Florence, 24-27 October, 1989) (Munich: Bruckmann, 1992), 146-151.

figures in this altarpiece. The light, which flows in from the left brightly illuminates the figure of St. Peter in particular, while where the light is the weakest, on the left, it allows St. Benedict's black habit to work logically with the entire colour scheme. In St. Peter's tunic and drapery we see some level of return to the type of colour modelling seen in the Santa Felicità altarpiece, for example the level of white used in the highlights on his sleeve, while the dramatic and widely tonally varied hue change modelling in the red to yellow drapery recall much more the style of the Carmignano *Visitation*. In the central group with the Virgin, Christ child, and St. Anne, Pontormo created a complex and tightly knit group, in the binding of which colour plays a crucial role. A fully saturated red tunic sets the Virgin apart from the rest of the group, which remains united by blue used as local hue, highlight, and shadow. A similar blue hue, probably the same pigment, appears as the local hue for the Virgin's drapery, the highlight for St. Anne's purple to blue drape, the midtones of the Virgin's headscarf, and possibly in the shadows and midtone of St. Anne's headscarf. In terms of colour composition, Pontormo returned here to the dark background seen in earlier works such as the Visdomini altarpiece and hinted at in the Carmignano *Visitation*. This sets the fully saturated hues in even higher contrast to the rest of the work, creating a greater impression of strong hues than in works such as the Certosa frescoes or the Capponi altarpiece, which have much more tonally neutral backgrounds. Pontormo was thus able to enhance the power and immediacy of his chosen hues and modelling systems and chose to do so particularly in these later works; the saturation levels have not dramatically increased but our perception that they have is due to the contrast in tonal levels.

Although little technical information is available on the Louvre altarpiece, it seems from the naked eye that there may be some relationship between the technique used in it, in the Carmignano work and the type of underpainting found in the late Raphael Vatican *Transfiguration* (c. 1518-20; Rome: Vatican Galleries) (Fig. 116), and equally the colour seen in the related *Raising of Lazarus* (1517-19; London: National Gallery) by Sebastiano del Piombo.[41] Until we have more information on the creation of the Carmignano and Sant' Anna in Verzaia altarpieces nothing substantive can be said. However the connection between the large scale figures in all three images and the recourse to fully saturated hues brightly lit -- and in the case of the Sebastiano and Pontormo works set against dark backgrounds -- should not be

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41 On the Vatican restoration and technical reports see: Fabrizio Mancinelli, "*La Trasfigurazione* e la *Pala di Monteluce*: considerazioni sulla loro tecnica esecutiva alla luce dei recenti restauri,' in John Shearman & Marcia B. Hall, eds., *The Princeton Raphael Symposium: Science in the Service of Art History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 149ff and idem, "Restauri in Vaticano in Occasione del Centenario Raffaellesco," in *Studi du Raffaello*, ed. Sambucco, Hamoud M, and Strocchi M.L., (Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Studi, Urbino-Florence 6-14 April 1984) (Urbino 1987), 479ff.

overlooked. Just where this contact came from is uncertain; after the May 1527 Sack of Rome, Sebastiano moved from Venice to Orvieto and back to Venice before returning to Rome by March 1529.[42] However, had Pontormo made the proposed trip to Rome in connection with the Poggio a Caiano commission, he may well have seen both paintings displayed together after Raphael's death in 1520.[43] Linda Caron has analysed the pair of Roman paintings as a *paragone* between Raphael on the one hand, and Sebastiano on Michelangelo's behalf on the other, between painting as a creator of relief or as a reproducer of reality. It should not be surprising then that Pontormo's works bear greater resemblance to Sebastiano's, not only because of the connection with Michelangelo but also due to the implicit meaning with regards to colour use.[44] Even allowing for the alterations in colour discussed by Linda Caron, the similarities between Sebastiano's use of vibrantly and noticeably fully saturated hues set against a dark background and an alteration in a similar direction in Pontormo's style can be detected.[45] Marked differences in the nature of the drapery folds exist but the overall approaches to and tenor of the colour do have resonances.

Very few large-scale works by Pontormo have survived from the 1530s until his death on 1 January 1557. Because of his connection with the Medici court during this period, we have a great number of portraits, but all three major fresco commissions have been either destroyed or lost. As such it is difficult to discuss colour in the tapestries because of the great change in medium. Similarly Pontormo received no commissions for altarpieces during this time. What we have left gives a fragmentary picture at best of his colour style. However, some of these fragments do provide fertile ground for discussion of colour style and influence and it is to these few pieces that the remainder of the chapter is devoted.

Perhaps the most interesting evidence for the rapport between Pontormo and Michelangelo does come from this period; between 1531 and 1533 Pontormo painted two works after drawings possibly given to him by Michelangelo: the *Noli Me Tangere* (c. 1531-2; various versions) (Fig. 117) and the *Venus and Cupid* (c. 1533;

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42 On Sebastiano's movements, see Michael Hirst, *Sebastiano del Piombo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), Appendix C, 158-9.

43 See Hirst, *Sebastiano*, Chapter V: the *Raising of Lazarus* was in the Vatican from 10 December 1517. On the display of the Transfiguration in connection with Raphael's funeral see: Kathleen Weil-Garris [Brandt Posner], "La Morte di Raffaello e la "Trasfigurazione"," from *Raffaello e L'Europa: Atti del IV Corso Internazionale di Alta Cultura* (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1990), 179ff.

44 Linda Kay Caron, "The Use of Color by Painters in Rome from 1524-1527," (Ph.D. diss., Bryn Mawr College, 1981), 45-47.

45 Caron discusses the effects of the relining of the canvas in the 1950s with a highly reflective white ground which resulted in "an almost complete reversal of the original color scheme." See Caron, "Painters," 46.

Florence: Accademia) (Fig. 118).[46] Signor Alfonso d'Avalos, Marchese del Vasto, a commander of the Imperial troops who had just finished laying siege to Florence, acquired the cartoon for the first from Michelangelo through Fra Niccolò della Magna; it has been suggested that Michelangelo recommended that Pontormo paint the work.[47] The conception of the second work, the *Venus and Cupid*, came as part of another room decoration, this time for Bartolommeo Bettini a friend of Michelangelo. The room was to be devoted to, as Vasari tells us: "all the ... poets who have sung of love in Tuscan prose and verse".[48] At the time that Michelangelo made the cartoon for Bettini, Bronzino had already created three lunettes of Dante, Petrarch and Bocaccio for the room. Even with allowances made for the dirty and somewhat yellowed varnish of the painting, it is difficult to imagine that the same man who created the Carmignano and Louvre altarpieces could, within the span of a few years, paint a work as tonally dark and absent of brilliant colour as the *Venus and Cupid.* In this case, when we take into consideration the presence of the grand, muscular, and in every other way Michelangelesque nudes, this alteration makes much more sense and can be attributed to the exigencies of the cartoon rather than any conscious rejection by Pontormo. He created an harmoniously coloured work from the cartoon, using subtle tones of blue, repeated in the groundcloth and sky, flesh tones repeated in the figures, the masks, the bow, and the distant hills, enlivened with touches of pink in the roses and faces and what must have been greens in the flowers and ground, the last of which has presumably turned to brown with age. The harmony of Michelangelo's cartoon and the fluency with which Pontormo transformed it into colour attest to the influence the *Venus and Cupid* had over the Academy during the sixteenth century as young students copied from it.[49]

Tragically, no trace of any of the largescale fresco cycles from the last twenty years of Pontormo's life remain. The oil frescoes at the Villa Medici of Careggi, done together with Bronzino around 1535-6, allegories of Fortune, Justice, Peace, Fame, Prudence, and Love, have all been lost. The Villa Medici at Castello loggia frescoes for Cosimo I around 1537-43 were also lost. And most lamentably of all, the great fresco decoration of the choir at the Medici church of San Lorenzo, still under progress at Pontormo's death, was destroyed in the 1730s-40s by the Electress Palatine Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici who no longer cared for one of the finest

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46 For a discussion of the various versions of the *Noli Me Tangere*, see Costamagna, *Pontormo*, cat. 69, 69a and 69b in respectively a private collection in Milan and the last two in the Casa Buonarroti.

47 Vasari/Bull, 2:261; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:326.

48 Vasari/Bull, 2:262; Vasari/Barocchi, 5:326: "... *gl'altri poeti che hanno con versi e prose toscane cantato d'amore.*"

49 Costamagna, *Pontormo*, 86.

projects of her predecessors.[50] Given the direction and diversity of colour use in Pontormo's later surviving works, it would be foolhardy, given the paucity of evidence left, to attempt to speculate on his late colour style. Furthermore, our usual contemporary sources are silent on the issue; neither Vasari nor Cirri make any comment with regards colour. Richa wrote after the destruction and Bocchi's only words describing the colouring in the angels of the right side of the Last Judgement as "*dolce e morbido*" gives us very little information that can be used to make a reconstruction.[51] Pontormo's letter to Benedetto Varchi on the Paragone, which might offer us some information on his thoughts regarding colour, ultimately disappoints. He discusses painting as being good due to its ability to replicate effects such as distant views, night, fire and to show something "nature never made". He does discuss the variety of media available in painting but ultimately concludes that the durability and cost of sculpture make it the superior of the two. Pontormo's diary, written during the period at San Lorenzo, also does not deal with colour in any way.

Jacopo Pontormo remains today as one of the central figures in colour style in the first half of the sixteenth century. Close contact with all of the major artists of this period both in Florence and in Rome, means that he certainly was not working as an eccentric loner, but rather as someone with all the newest colour styles in his vocabulary. That he managed to be influenced by all of these artists and yet create a colour style of his own that is as unique and diverse as his is, attests to his creative ability and own freethinking mind. Unlike many of his contemporaries, we have evidence of Pontormo's interaction with other artists in translating their own designs into paintings with colour so that we can see for example Michelangelo through Pontormo's eyes. We will never be able to reach a full assessment of Pontormo's colour style due to the extensive losses of his major works later in his career; however, even without these late works we have a sense of his stature at that time and can at least in our own minds, if not on paper, speculate as to what these late works might have been like. Even without more extensive evidence though there is little question as to Pontormo's status among painters during this period in terms of use of colour.

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50 For a complete bibliography on all three works, see Costamagna, *Pontormo*, cat. 75, 78 and 85 respectively. See also: E. Ciletti, "On the destruction of Pontormo's frescoes at S. Lorenzo and the possibility that parts remain," *Burlington Magazine* 121 (1979): 765-770.

51 A. Cirri, *Le Chiese di Firenze e Dintorni: Sepoltuario*, 5:2368 quoted in Cox-Rearick, 323; Francesco Bocchi, *Le Bellezze della Citta di Fiorenza ...*, (Florence: 1591), 253. Janet Cox-Rearick cites a document (p. 319: ASF, Fabbriche Medicee no. I rosso (Libro Debitori e Creditori B. del Duca Cosimo attenente a Muraglie del suo Palazzo ed altri luoghi, 1549-1552), 39r) which refers to a purchase of colours by Pontormo; unfortunately the document only lists money for "*colorj*" and does not specify what pigments were purchased.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ROSSO FIORENTINO

Of all of the artists dealt with herein, Rosso Fiorentino is perhaps the one least connected to the rest of the group, not only in terms of style but in terms of overall personal contact as well. Born in Florence in 1494, Rosso Fiorentino led an peripatetic life, dying on 14th November 1540 in France. As various writers have commented, many of the qualities of his career result from the wandering nature of his life. This makes the identification of his style with any one city difficult. In fact, he was exposed to the three major civic centres of Italian art by the time he arrived in Paris, in addition to some of the more provincial areas of Tuscany and Umbria. Perhaps because of his mendicant life, and perhaps also because much of his large scale work was done in France, where he fled from the Siege of Florence of 1530, some have difficulty treating him as a purely Florentine, Tuscan, or even at times Italian painter -- in stark contrast to his two colleagues, Andrea del Sarto, and Jacopo da Pontormo, who both spent almost their entire lives in and around Florence. Furthermore, Rosso's stylistic ties to earlier *quattrocento* Florentine painters, particularly traditionalists such as Ghirlandaio, are not as strong as his contemporaries; indeed, Rosso's interest in fifteenth-century art seems to fall more in line with sculptors such as Donatello. Admittedly this bears little relation to for our investigation of colour. Although Rosso's career continued in the court of Francis I at Fontainbleau a full ten years after his departure from Italy, the works painted there do not have any direct bearing on his relationship to the topic at hand: his Florentine contemporaries would not have seen his French work, nor we do know how aware he was of their paintings after departing Italy. Therefore, his French career will not be treated in this chapter.

Study of Rosso's work has increased almost exponentially in recent years due both to the publication of numerous unknown documents and to the studies made about him on the five-hundredth anniversary of the year of his birth. Attention has been paid to Rosso's colour style, but not specifically in the context of Florence, nor has his relationship to his Florentine contemporaries Andrea and Pontormo been explored in any depth since Shearman's thesis in 1957.[1] Rosso's development in

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[1] Here I refer to Linda K. Caron, "The Use of Color by Rosso Fiorentino," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 19 (1988): 355ff; Caron, "Painters"; D. Kolch, "Materials and Technique in an Unfinished Altarpiece by Rosso Fiorentino," *Bulletin of the American Institute for Conservation*

colour parallels his unique advances in other areas; special attention will, at appropriate times, be drawn to his use of colour in relation to pictoral depth and space. It is hoped that the examination of these paintings will provide some insight into Rosso's use of colour in various paintings throughout his Italian career, as well as giving some small perspective into how his work may possibly fit into the question of Florentine sixteenth-century painting as a whole.

ROSSO'S EARLY CAREER

As has been frequently noted when working with Rosso's *oeuvre*, we encounter the greatest vagaries in his early career.[2] Vasari tells us that: "In his youth, Rosso drew from the cartoon of Michelangelo [the Battle of Cascina], and he was willing to practise painting with only a few masters, since he had a certain opinion of his own which ran contrary to their styles".[3] A variety of artists have been nominated as Rosso's teachers, the main candidates being Andrea del Sarto and Fra Bartolommeo. Not only has David Franklin correctly pointed out that it is unlikely that Rosso could have been taught by an older master, but he also more importantly stresses that any evidence we may find to support an apprenticeship with one of the two masters could also provide a basis for Rosso's influence on them.[4] We know that he worked in Andrea del Sarto's studio for a time in connection with the San Gallo *Annunciation*, though not necessarily as a formal apprentice, and at roughly the same time as Jacopo Pontormo; in addition all three of these artists worked during the same period at the atrium dei Voti at SS. Annunziata.[5] As Shearman mentions, it is from Andrea that Rosso learned the elder painter's colour techniques and methods, going on to use Andrea's ideals in new ways in his early career, only to break resolutely with them in the 1520s.[6] Most of the evidence for the connection with Fra Bartolommeo comes from a similarity in composition, particularly the older artist's *Sacra Conversazione* works; the two artists' techniques could not be more different, Fra Bartolommeo working in a very polished and smooth style, while Rosso, even

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22-23 (1983): 74-81 and Teresa Leoni Zanobi, "Cangiante del Rosso Fiorentino," *Critica d'Arte* 51 (July/September 1986): 92-96.

2 See for example: Shearman, "Developments," 222 and Berti, "Inizi," 45-60.

3 Vasari/Bull, 2:170; Vasari/Barocchi, 4:474: " ... *Disegnò il Rosso nella sua giovanezza al cartone di Michele Agnolo, e con pochi maestri volle stare all'arte, avendo egli una certa sua opinione contraria alla maniere di quegli.*"

4 For a lengthy treatment of the subject, see Franklin, *Rosso*, 3ff; for a differning opinion see: Berti, "Inizi": 45-60. For more on Rosso's rapport with Fra Bartolommeo, see Roberto Paolo Ciardi, "Il Rosso e Volterra," in *Il Rosso e Volterra*, ex. cat., (Venice: Marsilio, 1994), 58ff.

5 Shearman, "Developments," 222; Berti, "Inizi": 45.

6 Shearman, "Developments," 222.

early on, works much more actively, leaving clear evidence on the surface of his strokes whether they be with the brush or the brush handle.[7] Ultimately, the problem is the virtually unsolvable one of differentiating between influence and apprenticeship. Without documentary evidence such as what we have for Michelangelo's apprenticeship with Ghirlandaio, we will never be able to pin down the details, particularly when considering Rosso's precociousness. From stylistic evidence it does seem likely that he had contact with Andrea and probable that he mostly likely interacted with Fra Bartolommeo, although for our purposes it is only the influence of the former colour style of the former which has much relevance.

Early on, Rosso was firmly rooted in the Florentine classical tradition, and it is for Florentine churches that his first works were done. In 1513, Rosso received the commission for the *Assumption of the Virgin* (c.1514; Florence: atrium, SS. Annunziata) (Fig. 119).[8] Fra Jacopo di Battista Rubeis ordered it to be painted in the atrium of SS. Annunziata as part of the Life of the Virgin cycle begun by Baldovinetti, continued by Sarto and Franciabigio, and later to be finished by Pontormo. Chronologically, this fresco falls between Andrea's *Journey of the Magi* of 1511 and *Birth of the Virgin* of 1514, and before Pontormo's *Visitation*.[9] Vasari recounts that "if his colouring had been done with the same mature skill that he acquired with time, he would instead of equalling the other scenes with his grandeur and good design, by a long way have even surpassed them."[10] We do know that Rosso had technical difficulties with this work and that he disliked fresco, which would add to the problems in this early venture into that medium.[11] This lunette-shaped fresco to the left of the cloister entryway has been detached. It is in a poor state, particularly with consistent loss in the shadowed areas, especially the blues; the Madonna and the fifth saint from the left are good examples. This loss of shadows makes it difficult to sort out the intended direction of the lighting in the painting itself; Rosso seems more concerned with the modelling of the forms; however, when directional light is discernable, it does come from the centre. The only time Andrea used directional

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7 For a more in-depth discussion, see: Franklin, *Rosso*, 3ff.

8 Payments run from 20 November 1513 though 18 June 1514; see Franklin, *Rosso*, 316.

9 Originally established by Shearman, "Annunziata": 152-155 and publised by idem, 153 and Franklin, *Rosso*, 296, docs. 6a-c. On Fra Rubeis, see Franklin, *Rosso*, 14, n. 58. I disagree with the interpretation which suggests that the current *Assumption* is actually the second version. Certainly on 16 June 1515 Andrea received the commision to repaint Rosso's work, but his fresco ultimately remained untouched; on this see Shearman, "Annunziata": 154-155, Franklin, *Rosso*, 20; Ciardi, "Volterra," 61 and E.A. Carroll, *Rosso Fiorentino, Drawings, Prints, and Decorative Arts*, ex. cat. (Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1987), 33.

10 Vasari/Bull, 2:170-1; Vasari/Barocchi, 4:475: "*... se il colorito fatto da lui fosse con quella maturità d'arte che egli ebbe poi col tempo, avrebbe, come di grandezza e di buon disegno paragono l'altre storie, di gran lunga ancora trapassatele ...*"

11 See Franklin, *Rosso*, 125 and n. 25 who cites Vasari; see Vasari/Bull, 2:177 and Vasari/Barocchi, 4:483: "*... ma egli fu sempre nemico del lavorare in fresco.*"

lighting in his work in the cloister is in an indoor scene; his light in these early works seemed to create form rather than represent any particular directional light source. In Rosso's work, part of the confusion may come from the painter's own indecision as to how to light a painting whose logical natural source is diffuse, coming both from the entryway to the right and from the overhead atrium opening. As a young painter, he had not yet learned, or possibly was not interested in learning how to handle depth and light with the same sophistication as his Andrea. He occasionally hinted at cast shadows, but in general the aim of the overall modelling system seems to be the depiction of plasticity rather than the creation of a lit environment.

The modelling itself does bear some similarities with Andrea's works, particularly in the diminution of light and hue when forms are blocked from the direct flow of light, which is Sarto's consistent and developing technique throughout his work in the cloister. In Rosso's fresco, the figures in the rear areas still retain a sense of colour rather than being shrouded by the darkness of *chiaroscuro*. Rosso also used *cangianti* colours in much the same way as Andrea did in the *Birth of the Virgin*; rather than the brilliant and tonally diverse, fully saturated changes of the *Quattrocento*, here the muted, desaturated hues allow the assertion of the volume of the form and, in Andrea's case, are more evocative of the real interior lighting conditions. As Rosso set his scene ostensibly outdoors, he was therefore perhaps either merely looking at and copying Andrea's work, or did not yet understand the lighting implications of Andrea's system, governed as it is by the location of the scene. Rosso used a pale pinkish red to yellow change in the fourth figure from the right -- almost identical to the change in Andrea's *Birth of the Virgin* -- to create a sense of volume. However, even in this early work, we begin to see manifestations of one of Rosso's stylistic characteristics: the depiction of form which seems almost contrary to reality. In the swash of drapery over the shoulder of the second from the right figure, and also in the under-tunic of the first figure on the left, he used the same odd, subtle change: in the second figure, for example, the lilac to thick yellow colour change gives little tonal contrast, making the painting more a juxtaposition of colours than a plastic creation of drapery. He also used the same technique in the fourth figure from the left, this time changing from lilac/purple to green.

The muted, narrow-ranged palette betrays similarities with Andrea's concurrent work in fresco. However, Rosso's palette is not nearly as gem-like nor disposed with the same virtuosity as in the *Birth of the Virgin*. He initially seems to use mainly the red, yellow, and orange end of the chromatic scale, which decreases the contrast present in the work; however this may be due to the aforementioned possible losses in the blue areas of the work. The physical composition, in which Rosso crowded the figures of the *Assumption* into a non-specific space, has an effect on the colour composition; the forced overlapping of draperies increases the effect of

a close juxtaposition of hues, and bears a less-than-usual relationship to actual drapery on form. This relationship has more in common with an abstract interlacing of lines or blocks of pigment. He set these figures against a background of red and lilac, which is then punctuated by other notes of green, blue, and yellow. He seems to have tried to locate the local hues used in the Virgin's drapery -- blue and lilac -- at the sides of the composition, but rather than anchoring and integrating her form, this arrangement seems to have created an imbalance in the blocks of colour. It should be remembered that this is his one of his first works; at this stage he was merely working out his ideas and techniques.

Vasari unfortunately does not mention any paintings between this work of 1513-14 and his next painting of 1518. On 30th January 1518, Leonardo Buonafé commissioned the *Pala Ripoi* or *Pala Buonafé* (1518; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi) (Fig. 120) as director of the Santa Maria Nuova Hospital in Florence, and in his role as the executor of the will of a Catalan widow, Francesca de Ripoi.[12] As Franklin discovered, Rosso was given five months to execute the painting, for which the specific saints and the use of gold were specified, although to our knowledge the latter was not used.[13] In addition, Vasari recounts the possibly apocryphal story of Buonafé coming to see the work, and because "all the saints appeared to him like devils," fled the house and refused the painting.[14] Franklin found no record of this incident, but did find that a dispute ensued over the amount of payment for the painting, which was finally settled when Rosso received the original sum specified in the commission, but the hospital retained ownership of the work and therefore the right to decide the location for the painting. It was originally to be hung in a chapel in Ognissanti; however because of Buonafé's dissatisfaction, he placed it in Santo Stefano in Grezzano.

Rosso again lit the painting in a more general way as little to no evidence of directional light can be observed. He did use an approach to lighting and space that was similar to Andrea's at the Annunziata in that the figures of both Saint Jerome and Saint John the Baptist show areas of whiter highlights than any of the figures in the

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12 See the excellent article by David Franklin, "Ripoi": 652-62. Due to room renovation and the bombing of the Uffizi this work unavailable for viewing other than for short periods; however it is here mentioned because of its excellent documentation, its importance as one of Rosso's first altarpieces and its relation to his departure for Volterra. For a discussion of possible technique-related reasons for Buonafé's rejection of the altarpiece, see: Rubin, "Color": 175ff.

13 For the 30 January 1518 contract, see Franklin, *Rosso*, Appendix B, doc. 2, 297 from ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano, 5718, ex-C660, Alfonso Corsi, 1517-21, fol. 10r-v. This seems to be the only of Rosso's contacts which makes any mention of specific materials, and here only that usual to the use of gold, which he rejected: " ... *ornatam et fulcitam auro et aliis ornamenti requisitis* ... " (10v). The later contract for the Citta di Castello altarpiece mentions colours (100r), but only as a general category; see Franklin, *Rosso*, Appendix G, doc. 2, 310.

14 Vasari/Bull, 2:171; Vasari/Barocchi, 4:475: "... *gli parvero, come colui ch'era poco intendente di questa arte, tutti quei Santi, diavoli* ..."

background; the difference here is that Rosso achieved this with the application of actual white into the highlights, whereas Andrea tended to lighten merely the local hue. Few passages of *cangianti* appear, and those that do centre on the Virgin -- setting her figure apart from the others who wear hue-modelled or tonally modelled drapery -- and on the scarf worn by Saint John. In the latter Rosso used brown in the deepest shadows (which may well be green pigment which has altered over the course of time), blue in the midtones, which has faded or been lost, and yellow in the highlights. Rosso seems to have counteracted this with the nude torso and dramatic expression of Saint Jerome, rather than with any colouristic device. The characteristic hatching technique appears again hereparticularly in the faces. In its present condition, the complete work strikes the viewer as a work not particularly unified or balanced in terms of colour, but one with concentrated areas set against larger areas of dark hues or dark lighting. As Franklin relates, this was surely a disastrous commission for Rosso. Not only did he lose the reputation which he surely would have received from undertaking a work in such a well-known Florentine church such as Ognissanti, but he did not receive any Florentine commissions for four years as a result.

THE *DEPOSITION* FOR THE COMPAGNIA DELLA CROCE DI GIORNO IN VOLTERRA

It seems clear that around 1519 Rosso left Florence due to a lapse in commissions following the Ripoi altarpiece fiasco; he travelled first to Piombino where he painted a chapel with an altarpiece of the *Dead Christ* for the Appiani family, now lost. It has been suggested by a variety of scholars and will be discussed later in this section that Rosso made a trip to Rome sometime during this set of travels. We do know that he then subsequently went to Volterra.[15] Regardless of the cause of Rosso's arrival in Volterra, he certainly found work there, painting the *Deposition from the Cross* (inscr. 1521; Volterra: Pinacoteca Communale) (Fig. 121) for the Compagnia della Croce di Giorno of San Francesco, and for the parish church in Villamagna the *Madonna and Child with Saints John and Bartholomew* (inscr. 1521; Volterra: Museo Diocesano) (Fig. 123).[16] The only mention Vasari makes of his work there is that "again at Volterra he painted a very beautiful Deposition from the Cross."[17] These travels are important in that during this period Rosso would have been relatively isolated from the Florentine stylistic enviornment; also, he would be continually exposed to new works outside that sphere. Two new influences on Rosso's colour in the *Deposition*, the 1410 chapel frescoes and the Sistine chapel, will be discussed after the altarpiece has been analysed.

The *Deposition* originally hung in the chapel or *oratorio* of the Compagnia della Croce di Giorno, to the right of the nave in the main church of San Francesco. We now have some information about the confraternity and about the history of their chapel.[18] Mone Tedicinghi built it as a private chapel with a dedication to the Virgin in

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15 On the departure from Florence and the work in Piombino, see Franklin, *Rosso*, 55-6.

16 The original location was established by Graham Smith in: "On the Original Location of Rosso Fiorentino's *Descent from the Cross*," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 28 (1976): 67-70. The commission documents for this painting are unfortunately not yet known; David Franklin has found and published substantial documents relating to the confraternity's plans for the redecoration of the chapel. See: Franklin, *Rosso*, 57ff and 302-303, Appendix C. He also publishes a document of 8 April 1521 in which Rosso appointed from Volterra a procurator (Piero di Niccolò Calefati of Piombino); this for the first time confirmed Rosso's presence in Volterra. See Franklin, *Rosso*, Appendix C, document 3, 303 from ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano, 16706, ex-P306, Tommaso Picchinesi, 1508-24, fol. 37r. For the complete bibliography on the modern restorations, see Franklin, *Rosso*, 277 n. 56, the publications about which came in 1938-9, 1949 and 1981. Ciardi, et. al, 12 publish a passage from the most recent publication (M.G. Burresi & A. Caleca, *Momenti dell'Arte a Volterra*, ex. cat. (Pisa: 1981), 27-9) which unfortunately provides little specific information. For more general stylistic matters, see: Roberto Paolo Ciardi & Alberto Mugnaini, *Rosso Fiorentino: Catalogo completo* (Florence: Cantini, 1991): 55ff and catalogue entry, 170ff by Alberto Mugnaini.

17 Vasari/Bull, 2:171; Vasari/Barocchi, 4:476: " ... *similmente a Volterra dipinse un bellissimo Deposto di Croce*."

18 For more detailed information and for the sources for the following, see Franklin, *Rosso*, 57ff and Susanne J. Pfleger, "La Cappella della Croce nella Chiesa di S. Franceso di Volterra," *Rassegna Volterrana* 59-60 (1983-4): 71-245; this article focuses for the most part on Cenni's

1315; the dedication changed to the Holy Cross in 1328, and at this point it seems probable that the Confraternities began to use the site. Volterra has hosted a confraternity of the Holy Cross since 1363 and by 1470 there were two of the same devotion, thereby necessitating the division into "di Giorno" for the older of the two, and "di Notte" for the newer. Many sources have discussed the effect which the devotion of the patron(s) had on the appearance of the altarpiece, with its clear emphasis on the cross. We know that this was a flagellant order and celebrated the feasts of the Invention of the Cross and the Assumption of the Virgin. Further information on the nature of these celebrations beyond the saying of requiem masses, and the possible role of the altarpiece in these -- given the intriguing name of the confraternity -- could expand our knowledge of the function of the *Deposition.*[19]

The painting survives in excellent condition and is beautifully displayed, now removed from its original frame. Some figures do seem to have sustained some loss or fading, which Shearman discusses in detail.[20] Fortunately, the original colour inscriptions on the *gesso* are legible through the paint loss, and we can now make some reconstruction: the cloak of the woman at left should be lilac as the inscription reads "*violoso*", and the wrap of the lower, reaching figure on the left ladder, should be blue ("*azuro*"). A further inscription in the hair of the Magdalene which reads "*azurro*", probably referred to the band intertwined in her hair. Thanks to the excellent method of display and the relatively good condition of the work, it is possible to understand much of how Rosso created this work and what his intentions for it were.

As has been frequently noted, Rosso adopted his own composition from that of the high altarpiece of the *Deposition* for SS. Annunziata by Filippino Lippi and completed by Perugino(c. 1512; Florence: Accademia) (Fig. 122). Rosso would have seen that painting while working in the cloister. The varnish on the Florentine work has yellowed somewhat so that were it cleaned the colours might be more vibrant; in its current state, there is no indication that Rosso took many colour cues from this work, although the compositional influence is certainly clear. Only the *cangiante* scarf of the figure on the right ladder reminds us of Rosso's potential approach to colour. Although Filippino has been a part of discussion of use of colour modelling earlier in Florence, a comparison of the colour styles of these two artists

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frescoes for the chapel.

19 For the feast days see Franklin, *Rosso*, 58; for the nature of the order see Pfleger, 178 who cites that flagellant orders at this time believed that this type of penance, in rememberance of Christ's Passion, could guarantee their salvation.

20 Shearman, "Developments," 229-30; there have been suggestions that the painting is unfinished. The fact that Rosso signed and dated it rules out this possibility and it seems more likely that Rosso deliberately played up "unfinished" qualities in the work which will be discussed later in the chapter.

demonstrates how much the use of this system has developed.

The proximity allowed by the low and unglazed display of the altarpiece permits us to learn more than usual about Rosso's working methods. The very low edge of paint shown by the removal of the frame confirms the thinness of the paint surface and reveals the edge where the painted surface originally met the frame. The surface of the painting is also very even, betraying almost no *impasto* touches. The reaching figure on the left-hand ladder provides an opportunity to examine Rosso's possible working methods. In creating this figure, it looks as if he laid in the yellow highlights first, and the shadows -- most likely blue -- were either not laid in or were lost. The lack of consonance between the yellow and the rest of the figure underlines the fact that what we now see must not have been his intention. However, it should also be noted that brown appears in the shadows, especially at the left; perhaps he alternatively began to drape the figure in yellow with white highlights, adding the brown to deepen the shadows, and then found he could not bring the highlights high enough and so revised his ideas, beginning to add yellow to indicate light. The third possibility, which could be confirmed upon close examination, is that the white is actually the *gesso* showing through, the yellow and brown are the high and low ends of the colour, and it is simply the middle ground which is missing. In general, it does appear, at least in the more easily examined lower areas, as though Rosso laid on the sections of light last, as they are thicker than the rest. White is one of the few pigments which result in *impasto*, so that this white to yellow to brown passage may be an example of that effect. Again, thanks to the thinning or loss in the aforementioned areas, we can see the sure, firm lines of the underdrawing, showing a style of draughtsmanship typical of Rosso. Somewhat oddly though the drawing under the cloak of the woman at the left bears little or no resemblance to the forms of the painted drapery and in fact hint that originally she would have worn a short sleeved tunic and that her hand, holding onto the swooning Virgin, would have been visible. The final painted way he had chosen to represent this Mary's support of the Virgin betrays another example of Rosso blurring the physical relationship between the figures, in that we no longer have such a graphic representation of the means of support. Another characteristic, although somewhat unusual aspect to the technique is the hatched brushstrokes, or brush-scrapes used in the depiction of shadows. He lays down a darker pigment over the light, and then scratches through, making firm, sure lines which reveal the lighter pigment underneath. These lines, when viewed from a reasonable distance, create the effect of even, almost geometrical shadows. They are especially visible in the skirt of the Magdalene, where he seems to have used the brush handle, and in the skirt of the woman to the left of the Virgin, where he seems to have used the brush itself. Andrea uses this same technique when painting the extreme right disciple in the San Salvi fresco, *The Last Supper* (Fig. 78), of almost

six years later. The related technique should also be noted, in which Rosso uses myriad, overlapping and intermingled hatchings of various hues to create the face of Christ.

Before discussing the inner workings of the painting, it is first helpful to examine each figure group to obtain a sense of how the colours are disposed, and of any physical relationship between them which may later be important. The first of the three main groups is that of the Virgin, the two women supporting her, and the figure of the Magdalene, although she could easily be included in the next group, composed of John the Evangelist and the boy. The third group is that of the upper figures surrounding and including Christ on the cross. The compact placement of the figures in the Virgin group make it initially difficult to discern the relationship between the figures, however the sense is that the Virgin has swooned; the arm of the figure to her left goes round the Virgin's arm which then hangs loose by her side. The figure to the left of the Virgin wears a brown to orange drape, and her shawl, as previously mentioned has lost its original hue. The Virgin herself is dressed in a garment of seafoam green, with a lilac wimple and a black veil. Where the shadow of the Magdalene falls on her, the hue of her garment almost exactly matches the hue of the distant landscape immediately behind and therefore beside her form; the Virgin's tone is slightly darker, but the hue and technique are the same. The resultant passage has a variety of unsettling outcomes: in addition to creating spatial ambiguity, it also makes the Virgin seem to only rest on the single lit left leg, making her look unstable, and thereby increasing the sense of vulnerability and swooning. Of the figure to the Virgin's right we can only see her terracotta red draped shoulders and head, a hue which resonates strongly with the blue sky behind this figure; her *cangiante* arm changes from red to green. There is some loss or fading in the red areas of this figure, which were perhaps painted with red lake pigment, one of whose characteristics is fading over time.

The figures in the John the Evangelist group contain much simpler blocks of hues: blue and white in the standing saint, and greens, yellows, and whites in the boy with the ladder; Rosso creates the Evangelist's drapery with four easily identifiable tones of the same hue. In fact, it is possible to count and inventory them and their placement. His blue vestment receives an almost identical treatment, though it passes to green in the shadows. The blocks of lit colour are more complex and numerous than those of shaded colour; this may be Rosso's version of Andrea's technique of colour loss or diminution in shadow. Much more complex colour arrangments make up the upper figures surrounding Christ. Here we find an increase in the use of *cangianti* modelling, for example in the head scarf of the older man, all the drapery of the pointing figure and possibly the tunic worn by the figure on the lower left ladder. This may be due in part to the decreased lighting conditions on this area of the panel,

for as we have seen in the Tornabuoni and Sistine chapels, *cangianti* modelling appears in areas where the lighting decreases. The cross is painted with a deep brownish-red, the background with a rich blue which begins very dark at the top of the painting, and fades and lightens as it moves downwards towards the landscape, which is turquoise in the distance and deep olive in the foreground. These colours resonate strongly and assert the all important form of the cross.

The lighting in this painting relates to its original location, in which are found small windows in the apse behind, and tall windows to the right and high up as the viewer faces the altar. The light falls in consonance with the real light in the chapel; within the painting itself, the light is surely more intense in the lower half, with the sense that it dissipates as it moves upwards. Rosso increases this sense, or rather creates it, by decreasing the tonal level of the hues in the upper half, and by replacing increased range with colour change when creating form. Within the painting, especially the upper half, Rosso creates different types of shadows, the most expressive of which are the strong falling shadows on which he keeps tight control, as in the distinct shadow of the Magdalene falling on the Virgin's skirt. In contrast, the shadow of John the Evangelist should fall on the knot of drapery around the Magdalene's knees, but does not; equally, the shadow of the boy at back should fall on the cross but does not. This control all works towards creating an increased drama, where the artist selectively enhances the interaction between light and shade within the painting. When he does choose to stray from this system, he uses the omissions to emphasise important players in the drama: pushing forward the Magdalene and the cross for example, and not allowing then to become shrouded by dark shadows.

In terms of the shadows themselves, there is little or no sense of *chiaroscuro*. When Rosso creates shadow, it is with pure hue. For example, he portrays a very convincing passage, in which the shadow of the head of John the Evangelist falls on his body, entirely with hue as opposed to with any use of black or white. Rosso maintains a full sense of definition by merely creating a swash of decreased tonality. It oddly seems to create an abstract X-shaped pattern of colour which again denies that this is meant as a representation of form. When these shadows are examined, the physical placement of the figures is not consistent with the lighting. For example, one wonders what is the relationship between the torsos of the two figures on the left-hand ladder; the lighting in the lower figure's torso makes the pair's spatial orientation quite ambiguous.

In addition, the lighting has a profound effect on modelling of the forms themselves. Because of the strong directional lighting, Rosso creates very distinct plane changes. However, he has not greatly darkened the shadows to the extent that they presumably should be under such extreme lighting conditions. He also uses this

intense light to create a quite pronounced line at the point of change between planes, which can easily be controlled by the way in which he chooses to dispose and place the drapery. This in turn enables him to create "fill-in" blocks or areas for unusual colour changes; these "fill-in" areas mean that he can juxtapose two or more colours, without having to determine naturally-caused points of change. He also uses the outlines of forms, and equally the lines within the form -- created by the point of change -- to define form. For example, the belt of the Magdalene shows the plane change from back to stomach with light; however her body itself could not possibly have that shape. Equally, he realises the potential of these lines for pure beauty, such as in the hanging edges of the cloaks of the woman to the left of the Virgin and in John the Evangelist, who look almost cut out. This sense of linearity throughout the painting, combined with the full rolls and knots of drapery in passages such as the sashes of the upper figures, the bunches of drapery around the Magdalene's knees, and the shoulder of the woman to the left of the Virgin, gives a sense of suppleness and motion. The swirls of drapery on the bearded figure at the top of the cross and upon the upper figure on the left ladder create a sense of wind in the upper area which is patently absent from the lower area with its draping, heaving, ponderous draperies.

These draperies, created with light, and shade, and hue, are the physical substance in which the modelling is carried out in this painting. Rosso unquestionably uses the colour or hue modelling system characteristic of the Florentine school of painters.[21] As discussed above, Rosso models his figures with blocks of isolated pigments, rather than blending one adjacent pigment into the next. Within these blocks, he subtly modulates the hues: for example the lower left, shadowed portion of the white drapery of John the Evangelist, which in itself is an almost abstract block of colour, subtly becomes darker in tonality as the material folds down and back towards the ground; the actual point of change is virtually imperceptible, showing a command of blending not immediately apparent from his otherwise angular system. In the back of the reaching figure, Rosso gives another display of this soft modelling, using pools of light and shadow -- as opposed to the lines generally seen in drapery -- to create the anatomy. In contrast, observe the woman to the left of the Virgin, in which every individual change between planes is visible; Rosso seems to lay down the darker pigment in the shadows and brush outwards from there.

In addition to employing the three-tone colour modelling system, Rosso uses *cangiante* colours throughout the altarpiece.[22] In the lower area, only the young boy who supports the right-hand ladder contains an example of true *cangiante* technique;

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21 See Caron, "Choices": 476-489.

22 Teresa Leoni Zanobi discusses *cangiante* in her article, although she takes a formal and almost purely analytical approach; see Leoni Zanobi, 92-96.

his tunic changes from olive green in the shadows through pale green in the middle tones to yellow highlights. Even more virtuosic is the juxtaposition of this drapery with the figure's right leg, in which Rosso intersects the virtually horizontal line dividing light from shade with an angled line dividing drapery from leg, resulting in four areas of tonality, articulated by an X, in which the shaded green and lit brown leg are incongruously, to the eye, of the same tonal level; it seems that since each falls under equal light, they should be of equal tonal depth. Rosso here accepts Andrea's technical advance allowing the denial of tonal unity, recognising that colours may not necessarily seem of the same tonal level when put under the same lighting. However, in the Rosso figure, because the drapery is *cangiante*, we cannot be certain of the true tonal level of the hue; it is therefore impossible in practice for the eye to tell whether this passage is tonally unified. Rosso uses more *cangiante* modelling in the upper portions of the painting, perhaps, as previously mentioned, to counteract the flattening action of more dimmed, less intense lighting. In the shouting, pointing figure on the left ladder, Rosso paints a tunic, the colour of whose shadows are almost impossible to discern; the garment appears to change from a very deep lilac or black, through midnight blue to red, although alternatively, it could be midnight blue through green to red. It does appear as if the red highlight pigment and the shadow pigment have been blended to form the mid-hue. In the same figure's sash, we have a black to dark blue to pale blue to yellow change. Though difficult to substantiate, this figure may be an attempt at representing coloured light. First, it is certain that the figure's red highlights act almost as an arrow that connects with the lower half of the painting and points to the central Christ figure. Second, in the upper area, the cap of the bearded man at the top of the cross consists of tonally equal shades of red shadows and blue highlights, though the hues can hardly be given these light-specific terms as their tonal equality makes difficult the discernment of light and shade; we can only sort out the lighting through our knowledge of the direction gained from the lower figures.

Finally, in terms of modelling, the lines throughout the painting created by the boundaries of plane change deserve mention. Shearman talks about these lines, created by the delineation between light and shade -- equal to the break between two flat unmodulated areas of colour, introducing a new linear element -- which can then be followed between figures.[23] As an example, take the line which begins at the base of John the Evangelist's cloak, follows up his arm, and then jumps up the legs of the figure on the right ladder, and finally through to Christ. Shearman asserts the idea that if the tones of the areas of colour surrounding these abstract lines match, then "logical" connections on the picture plane can be made between the forms containing

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23 Shearman, "Developments," 234.

them.[24] This tonal connection plays a major role in the discussion below on space in the *Deposition.*

From the previous discussion of the figure groups, we have a general idea of the hues present in the painting. It now remains to discuss their overall disposition and interactions in the painting. As discussed, Rosso uses a fairly broad range for modelling (e.g., in tonality); however, in terms of local hue, the range is much more narrow. It also seems important to note that many of the hues present in the painting are difficult to describe in conventional terms. Suffixes such as "-ish", or terms like olive, terracotta, and seafoam must be used to describe the resultant hues. Because there was a limited range of pigments available at the time, this unique palette most likely results from either mixing on the palette, or the overlapping of pigments on the panel itself. Rosso does frequently "match" hues from one figure to the other, or rather he repeats the same hue in different areas of various figures. Yellow appears in the highlighted areas of the boy and the reaching figure and in the sash of the pointing figure. Red makes its strongest appearance in the Magdalene, but also in the bearded man and the pointing figure; orange can be seen in the shadows of the figure to the left of the Virgin, the cloak of the pointing figure, and the sash of the figure on the right ladder. Green, in addition to creating the landscape, is laid down in the sashes of the Virgin and of the boy; equally, seafoam green is in evidence in her drapery and in the shaded areas of his tunic, and, more alarmingly, in the repetition of the green flesh tones of the dead Christ and the feet and face of his mother, the Virgin. Many versions of blue appear: in the cloak of the bearded man, in the tunics of the two upper ladder figures, and then in the tunic of John the Evangelist, the hue of which is the same as the distant mountains. White also appears in many variations; taken loosely, it can be said to be present in the creme of John the Evangelist, in Christ's lilac loincloth, and in the boy's sleeve. It seems that the green at the base of the composition is the only anchor to earth, while incongruously, the darkened blue above ties the sky to the upper figures, who then seem to bear more relation to the distant sky than to the actual ground close to and supporting them. It seems that in using his palette, Rosso gives an overall disposition of colours, with little concern for their relationship to form or to where spatially or tonally they may appear. It also belies a lack of concern with the reinforcement of depth and space with colour.

Rosso is not only aware of colour in terms of palette, modelling, pigments, disposition, etc., but more importantly for the period as a whole, he is also aware of colour in terms of its potential to either create or negate the spatial depth represented in a painting. For example, he uses the repetition of the same hue of blue in both John the Evangelist's tunic and the sky to establish a relationship between the foreground

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24 Shearman, "Developments," 237.

and the background, which could either act to reinforce a sense of recession or bring the background forward, which thereby equates it with the foreground and therefore flattens space. This latter role is more strongly exemplified in the resonance between the highlights of the tunic of the man on the right ladder, as Rosso again uses the same hue as for sky; here however the juxtaposition involves actual contact between the pigments on the picture plane. Three ladders, one leaning out, one back, and one to the right, should define space. Not ironically, it is only the ladder leaning on the right side of the cross' upright, parallel to the picture plane, that gives any sense of depth, whereas the other two ladders seem as grid patterns which merely allow for the logicality of the upper figures' positions and placement. There is also the sense that the higher tones with less saturated hues are at the surface, stressing the picture plane; the strongest, most pronounced and evidently angular plane changes also seems to occur in the foremost areas of the painting. These emphasised forefront areas exist in contrast to the extremely reduced background. There is little sense of the usual related diminution in depth and decrease in definition, even in the distance. And, as mentioned, the flattened, interlocked blocks of colour decrease plasticity because the resultant pattern of lines bears little relationship to plastic form; if forms have little definition, it is therefore difficult to consider them as volumetric forms existing in three-dimensional space. Rosso does achieve a strong sense of depth, mostly through juxtaposition rather than recession, when he uses tonal contrasts, as in the knot of the drapery of the reaching figure, the arm of the pointing figure, and the back of the boy all laid against the almost glowing blue of the sky.

In terms of colour composition, the balance of hues seems pushed towards the left side of the composition: in the Magdalene's lean in this direction, in the brightly lit and coloured pointing figure, and in the theoretical bright blue and orange of the woman to the left of the Virgin. This imbalance disappears if the painting is viewed from the left; additionally, the upper figures become more centralised and the relation of the Magdalene's face to the Virgin becomes more powerful from this view. The general sense of composition and emotion, which the colour composition reinforces is one of activity above and grief, heaviness and anguish below. Above, the firm gesture of the pointing man exists in sharp contrast to the lax arm of Christ and the relaxed arm of the man behind him on the ladder, which could hardly be considered to support the heavy body of a full-grown man.

In 1410, Giovanni di Giusti Guidi and Giovanni d'Ataviano Chorsino commissioned two Florentine painters Cenni di Francesco di Ser Cenni and Jacopo di Firenze, to decorate the walls of the oratory with scenes from the Legend of the True Cross and the Massacre of the Innocents, and in the apse scenes from the Life of the

Virgin and Infancy of Christ; the vault shows portraits of various saints.[25] While these scenes usually receive cursory mention in texts, their role for Rosso's colour merits closer examination. Overall, the *quattrocento* frescoes can be characterised as typically Cenninnian, but particular passages bear close similarities to some of Rosso's more noticeable colour handling. In a general sense Cenni uses the same type of zig-zag and hooked drapery ends we see in Rosso's painting, particularly in the orange drape of the woman at the left and in John the Evangelist's white cloak; if we compare these areas to, for example, the bystanders on the left of the *St. Helena Brings the Cross to the Adoring Throngs* (Fig. 124) and in the *St. John the Baptist* portrait (Fig. 125), we see a very similar approach. Both artists use an angularity in their overall creation of form which, if not exactly similar in detail, certainly shows likenesses in general kind. Second, if we compare the green to yellow *cangiante* of the man in the same group of bystanders with Rosso's figure of the boy at the foot of the ladder, the hues and striations of the modelling strike a similar chord. The ceiling frescoes provide a third point of comparison in their brilliant and fully saturated blue field, which must be ultarmarine, and which has a power very similar to Rosso's deep blue background, although without the effective modulation from dark to light. And fourth, the pose and dress of the woman at the centre right of the *Massacre of the Innocents* (Fig. 126) recalls in kind the Magdalene from the altarpiece. On a simple level this evidence demonstrates that Rosso, as most artists would do, strove to harmonise his work with the already extant works which create the environment in which his work would be viewed and used. It also shows a sensitivity to *quattrocento* art on Rosso's part, and in particular to *quattrocento* fresco colour style.[26] It also provides external evidence for some of the influences on his colour style in this work, which frequently gets treated as eccentric and unique.

Another possible influence on Rosso's colour was a trip to Rome that has been suggested for this period. Evidence can be found for such in a comparison of colour use in the Sistine chapel lunettes and the work of Rosso in Volterra.[27] Paul Joannides suggested that Michelangelo's colour offered an extreme alternative to that of Andrea

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25 On the patrons, see Lavin, *Narrative*, 115 and 115ff for a lengthy discussion of the arrangement of the frescoes; Franklin cites strong ties between the powerful Guidi family and the Compagnia, mostly in the late fifteenth and sxiteenth century (see Franklin, *Rosso*, 58).

26 Franklin has mentioned this with regards to the relationship to the Santissima Annunziata high altar by Filippino and Perugino which served as a compositional model; see Franklin, *Rosso*, 59-60.

27 For this suggestion see Franklin, *Rosso*, 56, Ciardi, et. al, unpaginated, 1 and *Volterra*, 55. We have as further evidence of Rosso's later contact with Michelangelo the letter written by him while in Rome to the older artist in Florence, dated 6 October 1526. See Franklin, *Rosso*, 132-3 and Appendix E, doc. 2, 306 of Florence, Casa Buonarotti, Archivio Buonarotti, X, 659 and for an English translation, Carroll, *Prints*, 22-23 which shows Rosso's keen interest to stay in good favour with Michelangelo.

del Sarto and Fra Bartolommeo.[28] A few instances of similarities in use and particular type of *cangiante* help to, if not firmly establish a visit to Rome prior to this altarpiece, at least put Rosso's colour use in some context, establishing its relationship to *quattrocento* and early *cinquecento* colour use. If we look for example at the kind of striated hue change modelling we see in the boy holding the ladder or the belt of the pointing man on the ladder at the left, we find quite similar passages in the Sistine lunettes; in particular, the right side of the *Achim and Eliud* lunette (Fig. 127), the left side of the *Asa, Jehosaphat and Joram* lunette (Fig. 128) or the left side of the *Amminadab* lunette (Fig. 129). The odd tunic on the pointing man, modelled in greatly tonally varied hues, and stretched across his stomach by the wind, bears similarties to the tunic on the figure to the left of the *Uzziah, Jotham and Ahaz* lunette (Fig. 130) in his lilac to yellow tunic and to the woman at the right of the *Naason* lunette (Fig. 131). Additionally, although not related to colour, the face of Nicodemus at the top of the ladder bears a striking resemblance to the old prophetic looking figure at the right of the *Salman, Booz and Obeth* lunette (Fig. 132); perhaps somewhere in all the lost drawings was a figure study of this fresco. While none of this proves a trip as conclusively as a document or a drawing could, it does seem to suggest that Rosso may have seen the Sistine lunettes prior to working in Volterra and that they effected his colour use in a similarly dramatically lit work.[29]

In summary, Rosso seems concerned here with the disposition of coloured forms on a surface, and not with spatial legibility, but rather with using colour as a vehicle for creating and negating form, space and subject. No one else previously seems to have chosen to portray so literally the narrative aspects of this scene, including the logistics of actually removing a heavy body from a cross, and the complex interrelations between groups of people who bear different relationships to the central figure, including the release of death and the grief of loss. The previous works by Andrea and Fra Bartolommeo do share a sense of weight and sadness with the Volterra altarpiece. However, none of the immediately preceding works, neither Fra Bartolommeo's *Pitti Pietà*, nor Andrea's *Luco* or *Vienna Pietàs*, have the same level of drama, of narrative and of the overwhelming gravity created with Rosso's high-pitched, intense use of colour in this work.

While in Volterra, Rosso also painted a *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Bartholomew* for the parish church of San Giovanni Battista in nearby

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28 Paul Joannides addressed this relationship in a paper at the Rosso conference in Volterra on 23 September 1994, entitled " Rosso and Michelangelo," although most of the paper dealt with drawings.

29 The lunettes, which show some sort of influence, range between both the first and second half of the Sistine execution, so no specific date could be suggested.

Villamagna (1521; Volterra: Museo Diocesano) (Fig. 123).[30] Many scholars have noted similarities with Andrea's *Madonna of the Harpies* (Fig. 69) and Fra Bartolommeo's *Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine* (Fig. 45) in terms of composition and figure pose. In Rosso's work we again see Fra Bartolommeo's apsidal composition, although cut off as we will see later in the *Pala Dei*. Rosso did not light this work nearly as dramatically as the Volterra altarpiece, although that is consistent with subject matter and its location in a side chapel. He did model figures in a similar style to those in the Deposition, particularly if we compare Saint John the Baptist's white drape with that of Saint John the Evangelist in terms of crispness and hard-edged effects. Rosso again used *cangiante* effects, although not on nearly so large a scale as the Volterra work, but here he seems to concentrate them around the faces of the figures: the scarf tie at the back of the Baptist's neck; the Virgin's tunic; and Bartholomew's pink to yellow tunic. The latter figure, unlike the other two, appears as a study in tonally unified hue modelling, perhaps again an exploration of Andrea's work. Bartholomew also closely resembles Pontormo's standing figure to the extreme right in the Annunziata *Visitation*, not just in pose, but also in drapery colour, although Pontormo's figure wears a white wrap and shot yellow drapery; perhaps at this time Rosso was casting back to former experiences in his colour experiments. The overall palette also matches earlier works in its subdued hues of sage green, pale yellow, blue, and browns, with the Christ child's red tunic adding the only note of true, fully saturated hues. Rosso therefore did make a distinct departure from the *Deposition* colour use, but one consonant with the subject matter and location.

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30 See ex. cat. 157-9; restored by F. Giannitrapani and M. Burresi for the 1994 exhibition.

FLORENCE, ROME AND BEYOND

Following his work in Volterra, Vasari tells us that Rosso has grown in fame and esteem; we now know through documentary evidence that he returned sometime before 2 October 1522, the date on which he rented a house in the Canto a Monteloro near the corner of the present day Borgo Pinti and via degli Alfani, near San Lorenzo.[31] That being the case, he would have found both Pontormo and Andrea still in Florence, though Pontormo only for a few months and Andrea to leave soon for Luco. Rosso seems to have stayed through at least part of the plague which drove his fellow painters into the countryside. As both Andrea dnd Pontormo been working in Poggio a Caiano prior to his return, and Andrea in France for a year Rosso would not have been greeted by any surprises from his contemporaries in the public art sphere upon his return; it is unlikely that he could have seen Andrea's uncompleted Panciatichi *Assunta* (c. 1521-3) produced for France, as it was in private hands until 1687 when it entered the Pitti.[32] In fact, despite Rosso's being characterised as the most absent of the three, he was responsible for perhaps the only two major altarpieces produced for the city of Florence by any of the three artists between his departure in 1517 and the Capponi altarpiece in the mid-1520s. Perhaps in part as a result of their absence Rosso was given contracts from two important patrons in two churches with high visibility. He received a commission in Florence from the Dei family for their chapel in Santo Sprito; the original commission was given to Raphael by Rinieri di Bernardo Dei, but Raphael gave it up to go to Rome in 1508.[33] It is likely that it was Rinieri's bastard son Piero who hired Rosso to continue the work in the chapel. Both artists were to paint a Madonna and Child; however, Rosso added St. Peter and St. Bernard to the Raphael composition -- those saints were specified in Dei's will -- as well as St. James and St. Augustine; the last two appear as the church belonged to the Augustinian order.[34] A copy of this painting still hangs in the original

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31 See Franklin, *Rosso*, 85 and Appendix D, doc. 5, 304-5 from A.S.F., Notarile Antecosimiano, 7921, ex-F501, Francesco Domenico da Catignano, 1520-4, fol. 272r.

32 For the partial but relevant provenance see: Shcarman, "Assumption": 128, n. 17 and *Andrea*, 122 gives the date of accession into the Pitti, although it was in the Granducal collection prior to that date.

33 Raphael received the commission for the Dei chapel in 1508; his uncompleted altarpiece, known as the *Madonna del Baldacchino*, now hangs in the Galleria Palatina in the Pitti Palace. See: Chiarini, Ciatti & Padovani.

34 Again, see Franklin, *Rosso*, 86. It is important to note that this painting is extremely difficult to view, as the individual panels have become bowed, and therefore reflect the bright light of the gallery. Michael Hirst, "Rosso Fiorentino: A Document and a Drawing," *Burlington Magazine* 106 (1964): 125 n. 21 discusses Johannes Wilde's suggestion to him that the figure of St. Sebastain derived from studies connected with Michelangelo's bronze David sent to France when Rosso was still a youth; cf. Louvre sheet, inv. n. 714r published in Berenson, Bernard: *The Drawings of the Florentine Painters*, 3 vols, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), 3:fig. 577.

chapel on the left side of the nave. Vasari goes on at some length about the *Pala Dei* (inscr. 1522; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti) (Fig. 133), saying that:

> Although it did not win him much praise at the time, subsequently, little by little, people have come to recognise its excellence and given it splendid praise; for its blending of colours could not be bettered, seeing that the highlights, where the picture is brightest, along with the less bright areas, come to merge little by little so softly and harmoniously with the dark parts of the painting, with skilful handling of the shadows, that the figures stand over and against each other, one throwing the next into relief by means of *chiaroscuro*.[35]

Sometime after 1691, when it was taken into the Pitti collection by Ferdinando de' Medici, the panel was extended on all four sides of the painting, expanding the architectural setting and thereby alleviating some figural crowding.[36] In terms of condition, the original and later varnishes on the panel have gone yellow, making the discernment of original hues difficult; however, if cleaned, the panel might well have an almost bleached quality, for despite the yellowing, some of the hues are still quite white. Additionally, it is difficult to discuss this painting in terms of the usual categories of lighting, modelling, palette and colour composition, the difficulty of the former due to the viewing conditions and the latter two being logical due to the overall yellowing. In technique, especially in the lower, most easily viewed figures, we again see Rosso's method of dragging the brush handle through wet paint to create shadows. Shearman discusses a repetition of colours across the diagonal, creating a space which is overrun by surface pattern that denies space and form.[37]

In terms of composition, the *Pala Dei* shows Rosso's contribution to the earlier dialogue between Fra Bartolommeo and Raphael concerning the *Madonna in baldacchino* format. In his own unique way, Rosso takes their ideas, which in the earlier works result in highly organised and harmonious works, and alters them, substantially crowding the space -- although this is in part due to the constraints of the number of saints -- and focusing in on the figures themselves. Rosso hints at but cuts off the upper part of the apse space behind, which serves as such a strong organisational force in the earlier two altarpieces. It seems in this painting that rather than exploring the complex relationship between space and forms, Rosso is more concerned with individual forms, and the potential action of light and colour on a

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35 Vasari/Bull, 2:172; Vasari/Barocchi, 4:476: "*... e se bene non gli fu allora molto lodata, hanno poi a poco a poco conosciuto i popoli la bontà di quella e gli hanno dato lode mirabili, perché nell'unione de'colori non é possibile far più, essendo che i chiari, che sono sopra dove batte il maggior lume, con i men chiari vanno a poco a poco con tanta dolcezza et unione a trovar gli scuri con artifizio di sbattimenti d'ombre, che le figure fanno addosso l'una all'altra figura, perché vanno per via di chiari scuri facendo rilievo l'una all'altra ...*"

36 See Franklin, *Rosso*, 86 and n. 15 who cites that the alterations were made to harmonise Rosso's work with Fra Bartolommeo's *Salvator Mundi* also in the Pitti.

37 Shearman, "Developments," 241-2.

surface or form. The Catherine figure, seated in the foreground, provides an excellent example of these concerns.[38] Shearman discusses the fact that in this figure Rosso takes the linear dissolution of the *Deposition* and multiplies it, creating even more complex divisions between planes which serve to break up the form. He paints blocks of colour and then puts them together, juxtaposing them to indicate plane changes, now in smaller, more contained blocks than the long, beautiful and carefully outlined ones of the Volterra painting. It seems as if Rosso has deliberately retained the blocking in of colour that would normally have been modulated by upper layers. Although there is some pigment loss, it looks as if the retention of this blocking in is entirely conscious in both the two Florentine works and in the earlier Volterra altarpieces. The roll of red drapery across the female saint's lap indicates to us the volume of her form, defines the location of her body and anchors it to the flooring. Consistent with her proximity to the picture plane, Rosso has desaturated her colours, emphasising her and making her a noticeable passage of beauty. The divisions of light and shadow here seem so harsh on an already faceted object that the form is then confused by the interlocking shapes which are produced. Rosso does not express the junctions between the separate figures in this painting with colour, but rather with texture, relying on our knowledge of form; at times there are few cues other than our innate knowledge of the difference between flesh and fabric, for example in the change between the shadow of St Sebastian's right shoulder and the red drapery of the saint behind him. Colour composition is here a lesser concern, as it also became in the later *Gambassi Madonna* of Andrea del Sarto.

Following his discussion of the *Pala Dei*, Vasari goes on to tell us that in San Lorenzo, Rosso "painted for Carlo Ginori the panel picture of the marriage of our Lady, which is held to be most beautiful" and says that no one could surpass Rosso in skill, "since he was so soft in colouring and changed colours within his draperies with such grace ..."[39] Carlo di Leonardo Ginori, Rosso's patron, made a series of wills

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38 To be explored at a more appropriate moment would be the development of this type of figure in the paintings of Andrea, Rosso, and Pontormo. The similar seated female saint, with legs folded under her body and surrounded by a swirl of brightly coloured drapery appears in Andrea's work. This figure also seems to be a point for the artists' virtuoso display colour pairings.

39 Vasari/Barocchi, 4:477: " ... *per esser egli stato nel colorito sì dolce, e con tanta grazia cangiato i panni* ..." "*Cangiato*" could be an unusual reference on Vasari's part to *cangianti*; alternatively it could merely refer to Rosso varying his drapery style. Payments ran from 20 December 1522 - 8 November 1523; see Franklin, *Rosso*, 316. On this painting see, E.A. Carroll, "Lappoli, Alfani, Vasari and Rosso Fiorentino," *Art Bulletin* 49 (1967): 297-304; Graham Smith, "Rosso Fiorentino's *Sposalizio* in San Lorenzo," *Pantheon* 34 (1976): 24-30 and David Franklin, "Rosso Fiorentino's *Betrothal of the Virgin* - Patronage and Interpretation," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 55 (1992): 180ff. The condition of this painting seems fairly good, with little surface abrasion, but it is affected by yellowed varnish.

which give us a great deal of information regarding his concerns for his chapel; although the contract does not survive, these wills do tell us that the painting must have been ordered by 6 April 1523.[40] The *Betrothal of the Virgin* (inscr. 1523; Florence: San Lorenzo) (Fig. 134) still hangs *in situ*, in the second chapel on the right of the nave of the church. Ginori maintained the dedication of the chapel to the Virgin and Joseph, but included saints Anne and Apollonia, making reference to an earlier wish to have the chapel devoted to those two female saints.[41]

The real light comes from windows high up in the nave walls, and therefore would only fall on the painting from the front. However, the light in the painting comes rather strongly from the right based on cast shadows, and Rosso seems to employ it in a fairly credible lighting system, which he often times manipulated to emphasise certain areas or gestures, for example St. Vincent Ferrer's pointing arm. The strength of lighting has also become much more gradual now, and not nearly as harsh as the *Deposition*. This decrease in harshness surely must be in part simply due to the fact that in this case he used what appears to be an exterior setting, but lit it, as David Franklin has commented, as if it was an interior scene.[42] However, there are still passages, such as the Virgin's right leg and the back of St. Anne kneeling to the left, where the linearity of the Volterra painting can be seen.

In modelling the figures in this altarpiece, Rosso again used cast shadows as he did in the *Deposition*, darkening the hues while retaining their chromatic integrity. The resulting tonal changes provide a sense of the lighting. The transitions within forms now are much more gradual and not heightened by the vibrancy seen in the *Deposition*, especially in the subtle modelling seen in St. Anne's drapery, where the pigments have actually been blended together to create now imperceptible plane changes in a style much more similar to that of his contemporaries. The brushstrokes and drapery seem more logically crafted, and we now have the sense in most passages that he has painted drapery and not planes. Still, the broken planes do appear in some areas, although in much smaller facets: for example, in the shadows of the St. Apollonia at the lower right and in some of the Virgin's drapery, he uses the hatching technique, which is convincing from afar, but upon closer examination creates somewhat flat planes. This multiplication of planes is a refinement of the system of modelling he worked out for himself in the *Deposition*. Despite the hatching and shattering of form, Rosso still took recourse to some techniques which emphasise form. For example, in the drapery covering St. Apollonia's stomach, Rosso used a type of modelling similar to the technique of Pontormo in Santa Felicità,

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40 For an extensive discussion of the wills, see Franklin, *Rosso*, 94ff and Appendix D.

41 For a lengthy discussion of this interesting and unusual dedication which will not be treated here, see Franklin, "Betrothal": 185ff and Franklin, *Rosso*, 97 and 99.

42 Franklin, *Rosso*, 107.

where the material clings to the figure in such as way as to appear like drapery in an *all'antica* style. The red shadows of the hue change modelling in the woman kneeling on the steps with a child in her arms appears to be lake which had significantly faded, altering the appearance of the tunic. Linda Caron discusses the introduction in both altarpieces of Rosso's "final" mode of colouring, involving a hue modelled foreground surrounded by a background painted in what she terms as red *chiaroscuro* background.[43]

For his palette, Rosso chose jewel-like hues, perhaps best exemplified in the amber and sapphire draperies of Joseph and the amethyst, sapphire, and emerald of the Virgin set against the alabaster and jet of the priest. Rosso employed almost a *contrapposto* in colouring the drapery of different figures; for example, he places an emphasis on the group actively involved in the betrothal by using more solid blocks of fully saturated, pure hues, while the surrounding saints appear in more muted, earthy or pale colours such as Saint Anne's cream, brown and yellow ensemble or Saint Vincent Ferrer's required black and white Dominican habit. He stressed the centre focus by placing the anonymous figures behind the Virgin and Joseph in red to yellow hue change on the left and pink on the right. Rosso concentrated the simply modelled, pure hues in this central couple while everywhere else the colours are scattered, shattered and desaturated. The exception to this is again St. Apollonia; she throws off the otherwise balanced colour composition created by the equal weights of the two protagonists; this bright colouring and blocky modelling serves to enlived the composition, making it much less stable than Fra Bartolommeo's prececent, but also more active and interesting for the eye.

In some areas, Rosso unified the physical composition. This may be a good example of what Shearman calls a balanced isometric composition, where the colours are divided axially; while they may not repeat in exact, mirrored symmetry, their general disposition falls evenly between the two halves of the painting. For example, the neutral areas of St. Vincent Ferrer and Anne balance one another, as do the *cangiante* passages in the Apollonia figure and the woman with the child. Rosso perhaps adopted this kind of colour composition from Andrea's work, in which all colours could appear anywhere in a painting; as evidence of this similarity, the blue of the Virgin's drapery appears in the *cangiante* shadows of Apollonia and the highlights of the woman with the child, while and the desaturated pink of the suitor behind Joseph appears in the highlights of Apollonia. In contrast, amber seems to run throughout: in the background, angels, and St. Anne's lap, all acting as a unifying, background colour. *Cangiante* seems to be used here for pure beauty, and has become barely convincing as a creator of plasticity. Linda Caron connects this use of

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43 Caron, "Use": 365.

cangiante with the arrival of Perino del Vaga to Florence; this certainly makes sense given his decorative and highly elaborate style.[44] The difference between this painting and previous ones seems to be that though the overall system of modelling, lighting and composition is the same, the modelling technique has become represented with smaller blocks on paint on the surface.

Again, as in both the *Pala Dei* and the *Deposition*, Rosso played with depth in this work; however, unlike the former compositions, this depth is now accomplished through lighting. The middle ground figures, such as St. Vincent Ferrer and the woman with the child, are the most dimly lit, whereas the front (Apollonia and Anne) and central (Virgin and Joseph) figures are brightly lit if inconsistently. The crowding of the figures denies space as well; we are given no space in which to realise the diminution and recession into the background. Rosso indicates this with the steps in the foreground, but the space is abruptly terminated by the central group of figures.

After a lengthy discussion of an incident involving Rosso and his Barbary ape, Vasari tells us that Rosso "made his way to Rome where his works were in high demand."[45] He there painted the *Creation* and *Expulsion* in Santa Maria della Pace (1524; Rome: Santa Maria della Pace), which Vasari calls "the worst he ever did in all his days," an painting representing the *Dead Christ with Angels* (c. 1524; Boston: Museum of Fine Arts) (Fig. 135), for his friend Leonardo Tornabuoni, Bishop of Sansepolcro, and most likely the *Death of Cleopatra* (c. 1524; Brunswick: Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum) (Fig. 136).[46] For our brief examination of Rosso's Roman period, the *Dead Christ* serves as virtually the only documented Roman example for the Santa Maria della Pace work has been unavailable for viewing due to ongoing restoration work and is in lamentably poor condition. It has been suggested, with documentary support, that the Boston painting was always destined for a private chapel in Tornabuoni's own Sansepolcro; this accounts not only for the reference to the sepulcre on which Christ sits, but also iconographic link with the Resurrection.[47]

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44 Idem, "Painters," 65. For the view that Perino del Vaga had little influence on Rosso's style, see Franklin, *Rosso*, 110 and 119.

45 On the ape, see: Idem, "Monkey Business: the puzzle of Rosso's ape," *Source* 13 (1994): 25-30.

46 Vasari/Bull, 2:175-6; Vasari/Barocchi, 4:480: "*Il Rosso non fece mai peggio*". On the Santa Maria della Pace works see Hirst, "Document". For the 26 April 1524 contract for the Santa Maria della Pace work see: Franklin, *Rosso*, Appendix E, doc. 1, 305 from ASF, Corp. Relig. Soppr., 20, Sant'Orsola detto la Santissima Annunziata d'Arezzo, vol. 18, *Filza Seconda di Memorie della Venerabil Compagnia della Santissima Annunziata, 1380-1620*, fols. 99r and 106v. See John Shearman, "The *Dead Christ* by Rosso Fiorentino," *Boston Museum Bulletin* 64 (1966): 148-72. For the provenance of the *Dead Christ with Angels* see David Franklin, "New documents for Rosso Fiorentino in Sansepolcro," *Burlington Magazine* 131 (1989): 822-3 and more recently with revisions, *Rosso*, 138-42. For a treatment of the effects of this trip on Rosso and his interaction with other artists in Rome during this period, see Caron, "Painters".

47 For this suggestion see Shearman, "Christ": 148 and Franklin, *Rosso*, 142

In the *Dead Christ* (Fig. 135), the figure of Christ, oddly flattened and poised on the toes of one foot, yet still more convincingly and closely observed and represented than in many other of Rosso's nude figures, dominates the composition. Rosso lit the work strongly from the left creating deep pools of shadow, particularly in the lower right corner, in some ways similar to Raphael's dramatic lighting in the lower portion of the *Transfiguration* (Fig. 116), which Rosso may well have seen during a Roman visit.[48] From this shadow emerges the main points of colour -- coming from the drapery of two of the four angels and the rich, deep, fully saturated blue drape on which Christ rests. As has been aptly described, each angel contains a complimentary pair of hues creating not only balance around the figure of Christ but also drama through the reaction of the hues one to the other; and yet ultimately the angels only act to frame and accent the vast the figure of Christ.[49] Most authors comment on the increasingly dark tonality used by Rosso in the 1520s, of which this work serves as a prime example. In contrast to the earlier Florentine works in which he allowed the darkness to become Sebastiano's reddened *chiaroscuro*, here Rosso plunges large parts of the panel into dramatic dark brown or black creating a much more dramatic and powerful image, albeit on a smaller scale. Rosso modelled the drapery using tonal modelling on the left and dramatic hue-change modelling on the right, the latter of which consists of blue and red through lilac to a dark pink hue set against stark white cuffs at the elbow.[50] It is these unique gems of hue which create the palette Rosso chose for this work. Additionally, at this point Rosso has come under the sway of the elegance not only of the style but also of the handling of paint shown to him by Parmigianino in Rome; Shearman analyses in depth the effect of Rome on Rosso, highlighting the fact that his earlier "anti-plasticism" could not survive the impact of Roman antiquity and the work of Michelangelo.[51] This clearly extends to his colour use in this work which in all areas -- modelling, lighting and palette -- changed dramatically during this period. The hard-edged, flat, and dramatically emotional colour of earlier works is here replaced by a level of polish and finish which will characterise his works from here onward, and which will serve to separate Rosso's work markedly from that of his contemporaries, particularly Pontormo.

In the smaller and more intimate *Death of Cleopatra* (Fig. 136), certainly for a private patron, Rosso betrays a similar approach to colour and overall composition in that a single nude figure dominates the panel; in this case yellow, grey, pink and

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48 Linda Caron ("Painters," 69) mentions the connection with Raphael as well.

49 See Shearman, "Christ": 150.

50 This painting has not been seen firsthand; therefore the possibility of pigment alteration or damage should not be completely eliminated.

51 See Shearman, "Christ": 161-168.

green surround the figure of Cleopatra creating an impression of colour similar to, though less strong and dramatic than that in the *Dead Christ*. Presumably function, subject matter, and site could all account for this change in approach, yet close dating and place of creation result in similarities in colour and composition between these two smaller-scale works. The *Death of Cleopatra* confirms that this new style is truly a sea-change in Rosso's work at this time, and that he was not merely altering his style for one commission. Rosso's new approach to and interest in luxurious surface and rich detail of both hue and object not only characterise his style in these two works, but even more so what he will subsequently create.

At the end of his time in Rome, Rosso was taken prisoner in the Siege; after poor treatment he barely escaped, making his way to Perugia where he was looked after by the Perugian painter Domenico di Paride Alfani.[52] Upon hearing of Tornabuoni's presence in Borgo Sansepolcro, Rosso went to that city to find his friend and patron, arriving by 28th January 1528. Through Bishop Tornabuoni, and Rafaelle dal Colle who gave up the commission, Rosso received the contract on 23 September 1527 for the *Deposition from the Cross* (1527; Sansepolcro: Convento delle Sorelle delle Orfanelle) (Fig. 137) from the Confraternity of the Holy Cross and its prior Francesco Sindachelli for their new high altar, finished but three years earlier.[53] Because of its sheltered location and simple care, the painting has remained in excellent condition. Interestingly, Rosso placed the three ladders in the background of this painting with almost the same orientation as those in the Volterra work; however, in this painting the viewpoint is much closer and it is on the lower figures and a later moment in the narrative -- after Christ's body has been taken down from the cross -- that the artist focuses. Rosso created a combination of the Deposition and the Pietà subjects, showing the cross for the former, and Christ being laid on the Virgin's lap, almost in preparation for the Pietà. Like Pontormo then, he explored the continuation of each narrative and chose the most emotional if not necessarily iconographically standard moment. The lighting, which falls strongly from the left, picks out the figures surrounding the dramatic figure of Christ , while deep *chiaroscuro* shrouds the figures in the back. The modelling here relies heavily on the strong lighting and, even more so than in the Volterra painting of the same subject, is governed by the bright highlights and deep shadows they create. This drama comes in part from

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52 See Franklin, *Rosso*, 157.

53 For the 23 September 1527 contract see Franklin, *Rosso*, Appendix F, doc. 4, 308 from ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano, 108, ex-A108, Francesco Aggiunti, 1525-28, fols 181v-182r. See also Carroll, "Lappoli": 297-304; Franklin, "Sansepolcro": 817-827; Caron, "Monkey": 25-30. Franklin ("Sansepolcro": 817 n. 1) cites that the painting was restored by Carlo Guidi in 1981 for the *La Toscana nel' 500* exhibition; see: A.M. Maetzke, *Giorgio Vasari - La Toscana nel '500*, ex. cat. (Arezzo: 1981), 324-5.

Rosso's representation of an eclipse, based on a Biblical account of the Crucifixion.[54] Presumably at this point that narrative fact suited Rosso's increasing interest in showing darkened scenes such as in the *Dead Christ*; the eclipse after the Passion allowed him to do this with authority from nature which even Leonardo would have admired. Rosso used a variety of systems of modelling, though mostly it seems to be hue modelling with the addition of black and white, where needed, to increase the drama of the lighting: take for example the woman at the lower left, in which he certainly uses white. In this figure, Rosso used brown in the shadows, and brushes white on a dark background to create the white highlight; the areas of colour meant to represent the planes of her drapery now do not even meet. The only passage of *cangiante* occurs in the figure on the ladder at the upper left -- surely a reference to the reaching figure in his own earlier painting -- and here, as in the pointing figure in the Volterra *Deposition*, it seems that Rosso again wanted to give the effect of coloured light. His hatching and linear modelling still appear throughout the work and where it is thin, the gold layer of priming shows through. Rosso punctuated the colours in his palette with the strange and riveting lilac-coloured body of Christ, a hue incidentally, as in the Volterra work, that he repeats in the face of the Virgin. Green appears as another point of emphasis in Nicodemus, the turbaned figure behind the Virgin, and the mysterious cloaked figure to the right of the ladder. Franklin has found that green had symbolic connotations for the confraternity based on the colour of their robes and it is likely Rosso took advantage of this when planning his colour composition.[55] From the previous *Deposition*, Rosso continues to use intense lighting to enhance the drama of the scene, although the emotions, certainly of the Virgin and of the other mourners as well, have become much more open and theatrical. The modelling still owes a great deal to the lighting system, and though he continues to use fairly bold techniques, they now give the overall appearance from afar, of more finished drapery.

On 1st July 1528 after finishing work on the *Deposition*, Rosso received the commission for a *Risen Christ in Glory with the Virgin, three saints and the People of Città di Castello* (1528; Città di Castello: Duomo) (Fig. 138) from the Compagnia del Corpus Domini; he was given one year to complete the work, necessitating that he work with relative speed. The painting would hang in the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament to the right of the nave in the Duomo of that same city.[56] The work we

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54 Luke 23:45 and Matthew 27:45; see Franklin, *Rosso*, 175.

55 Franklin, "Sansepolcro": 821, n. 22.

56 Vasari/Bull, 2:176; Vasari/Barocchi, 4:484. For a lengthy discussion of the confraternity, the provenance of the painting and the original location see Franklin, *Rosso*, 185ff. For the 1 July 1528 contract see Franklin, *Rosso*, Appendix G, doc. 2, 310 from ASF, Corp. Relig. Soppr., 20, vol. 18, *Filza Seconda di Memorie dell Venerabil Compagnia della Santissima Annunziata*, 1380-1620, fols. 100r and 105v. The *Risen Christ in Glory* was restored in 1981 by G.

now see has undergone numerous restorations in the past and, according to the 1982 report, suffered substantial damage including: an unstable panel support which had the four corners cut off at a later date, flaking of colour, repaintings, and altered varnish, all of which the restorers report makes impossible the identification of any pigments. They were able to identify an oily binder and brown-black *imprimatura*, but no further information.[57] This poor condition, together with the current hanging of the painting extremely high on the altar wall, make any sustained colour analysis very difficult. He continued the development of very dark lighting, oddly creating Christ as a dark figure against a lit sky, much like Pontormo's resurrected Christ for the Certosa, although the effect in Rosso's work may well be due to the condition of the sky pigment. Through this darkness appear passages of bright, fully saturated colour such as the drapery around Mary Magdalene's legs (the figure at the left below the Virgin), and the red, yellow and green which appear in the figures representing the people of Città di Castello. With regards modelling, Rosso's technique here does not seem to have changed substantially from immediately preceeding works. We see a similar approach to rolls of drapery and faceting as in the *Betrothal* and later in the *Deposition* in Sansepolcro. Rosso does seem to have used a greater range of subtle hue change modelling in this work than almost any other work to date, with the only passage appearing in the seated woman's now dark redish-purple to yellow shot tunic. In this figure and in Mary of Egypt (the figure to the right and below St. Anne) he seems to have returned to the angular, sharp, almost geometric lighting seen earlier in the Volterra *Deposition*, although in this instance it does not appear throughout the work.

For Rosso's Italian career, like Pontormo's late Florentine career, we have no further works which survive. Most of his work after Città di Castello consisted of either engravings, or drawings, or uncompleted projects. While working on the *Risen Christ in Glory*, perhaps in part as a result of the roof of the church falling on him while painting, Rosso fell ill and returned to Borgo Sansepolcro, then to Pieve Santo Stefano and Arezzo, where he stayed with Giovann' Antonio Lappoli and began work on a fresco cycle for the atrium of the church of the SS. Annunziata.[58] This work

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Marussich and N. Bracci (Franklin, *Rosso*, 290 n. 81); for a report see: Umberto Baldini, ed., *Metodo e Scienza Operativa e Ricerca nel Restauro*, ex. cat. (Florence: Sansoni, 1982), 96-99 with colour plates XLVIII and XLIX) and Umberto Baldini, "Nota sul restauro della Pala di Città di Castello," in Eric Darragon, *Manierisme en Crise: Le Christ en gloire de Rosso Fiorentino à Città di Castello* (Rome: Edizioni dell' Elefante, 1983), 91-2. All sources comment on the extremely poor condition of the work, and the high, virtually inaccessible hanging which exacerbates matters. Because of the extremely brief viewing time and unavailability of good colour reproductions, this painting will not here be discussed.

57 Baldini, *Metodo*, 96-8.

58 On the later visit see Carroll, "Lappoli". On the Arezzo works, see Franklin, *Rosso*, Chapter 9, 229ff.

sadly never passed the cartoon stage. Because of antagonisms between the citizens of Arezzo and Florence during the 1530 siege of the later city, Rosso left Arezzo for Borgo Sansepolcro, from where he was called to Città di Castello by the commissioners of the *Risen Christ in Glory* who wanted their painting finished . After completing the Città di Castello panel, Rosso left for Venice, where he was entertained by Pietro Aretino and then went to France, where he had long wished to go, and there joined the court of Francis I.

Unlike his contemporaries, Rosso was arguably exposed to a greater range of influences from outside the Florentine sphere, and reacted to them in a much different manner. Perhaps due to the effect of his travels and certainly to his unique style, he tended to focus on more abstracted use of colour, and on ways of applying it which sometimes would counteract the very forms he was trying to represent. It was also for these sorts of effects that he chose to mine other sources, such as the Sistine chapel, so that he focused on the more unusual passages in a source rather than its more general appearance or useful effect. Because of restorations and documentary research, we are now able to put his works into a broader context. From the Volterra *Deposition* we are able to learn much about his working methods, and from the *Pala Buonafé* we gain information about his movements and dealings with patrons. Rosso seems to emerge from his travels and trials as an artist who learned from those who went before him, yet was willing to experiment with the tools left to him and, while he was influenced by other sources tended to employ them in a way which makes them perhaps not immediately identifiable. He understood colour as not only the material of a lit environment in a painting, but also as the creator of form and space. It is perhaps in realising this latter role that Rosso then understood that he could use colour not only to create these things but also -- whether consciously or not -- to deny, negate or, as much as was possible for him at that time, move towards breaking them up. This is what is in part responsible for the incredible passages seen in some of his best work, which show such a high level of emotion and virtuosity.

CONCLUSION

At this stage in the analysis, it becomes necessary to draw together the many threads that weave throughout the various chapters so that we may take a look at the larger tapestry of colour in Florence formed during the early sixteenth century. The examination of each artist's style remains crucial to the understanding of colour during this period; however, we must look beyond those issues to see what the broader themes were of colour were. By doing this, we can come to a deeper comprehension why artists employed colour modelling and the various factors which could affect their choice to use that particular way of creating forms in painting. For example, when was colour modelling used consciously and why? And was it only within the context of Florence and were most exceptions outside of Florence? Exploring issues such as decorum, continuity, change, colour in particular settings, representation, expression, naturalism and convention in relation to the foregoing analyses helps to complete our understanding of the development of colour use in Florence. This prompts a return to the issues of colour modelling and art in Florence raised in the introduction of the dissertation.

The interactions between the various artists, in commissions such as Santissima Annunziata and for the Borgherini bedroom suite, play a crucial role in the development of the ways in which this particular group of artists used colour. Shared work and isolation tend to drive developments in colour use in different ways, and this in part depends on our understanding of the relevant artist's personality. For example, Pontormo, who we are led to believe by Vasari reveled and worked best in solitude, created his most dramatic colour statements in isolation from the others; here reference is made to the Certosa and the work at Santa Felicità. However, he also worked well in a group: for example, at Poggio a Caiano he created frescoes supremely appropriate to the site, matching palette and modelling range to Andrea's fresco and to the location; his own unique style shines through in the Borgherini panels where his work, because of some combination between physical location in the room and meaning, stand out as particularly brilliant in both senses of the word. Interactions in the context of the workshop remain much more difficult to discern; however, it is clear that Andrea's colour style during the time in which Rosso and Pontormo would have been attached to him influenced the younger two in their work at the Annunziata, despite the fact that they later departed from the style. Likewise,

Michelangelo was initially quite dependent on his training on fresco technique in Ghirlandaio's studio, when returning to painting after a long hiatus. Additionally, we find that certain artists such as Andrea del Sarto, Michelangelo and Pontormo remain at the focus of Florentine colour use and modelling, whereas others such as Fra Bartolommeo remain for the most part on the periphery, only becoming the centre of attention at particular points. Each one of the former group takes up issues in colour modelling raised by his predecessors and moves things on in one way or another.

This raises the question of the extent to which we can discuss continuity and change in this period with regards colour modelling; was the artists' aim to maintain the same colour use or to alter it? Technique remains relatively constant in that each artist uses colour rather than black and white to create his figures; there is a consistent and traceable use of saturated hues, not dimmed by the addition of black to create shadows, which originates with Cennino. This makes it an old, traditional and media-based colour style to use. Yet in no way could one argue for a strict continuity from the fourteenth through the early sixteenth century. Clearly colour modelling does persist through this period but not in any consistent manner; By the end of the fifteenth century certainly, only the artists relatively conservative in style carry on in using it. While it does not seem to be the method continually taught in workshops -- witness Andrea's own dissatisfaction with the tonal disparities it causes -- artists did seem to recommend some sort of compromise between expression, naturalism, convention, and representation. In the struggle to do just that some returned to this older manner of painting. In the 1520s it seems many did so; during those years, as part of the trend, artists such as Pontormo, Rosso, and Andrea had recourse to more fully saturated hues than they had in the past. This overlaps with their supposed viewing of the Sistine Chapel at the end of the 1510s which would provide the impetus for the change, but does not explain the rapidity with which they transformed the technique.

One of the major changes in colour modelling involves the skill with which it was used; for example, the shift from Ghirlandaio's striated red to yellow hue change in the Tornabuoni Chapel to Michelangelo's virtuoso handling of the same *cangiante* in the Libyan Sibyl of the Sistine Chapel, or Pontormo's light-filled altarpiece for Santa Felicità. In each instance, the technique remains very similar, but the artists used it to different ends. The addition of content, which will be discussed below, represents another variation in the ends to which colour modelling can be used which transforms the style over this period. And the inconsistent and experimentational manner with which both Rosso and Pontormo rely on colour indicates their novel relationship to its use at this time.

Each of these artists also realised and took advantage of the ways in which colour could be used in particular environments or settings. Their concerns began with Ghirlandaio and Filippino who, in particular lighting conditions, took advantage of the visibility of fully saturated hues in their work at Santa Maria Novella. Through experiments and developments in the technique, colour modelling appeared in increasingly sophisticated contexts. For example: the way in which Pontormo suited his palette and subdued his modelling to fit the rural, country setting of the frescoes for the Medici villa at Poggio a Caiano; the unity of hue and tone in Fra Bartolommeo's altarpiece for the Signoria; and Rosso's reaction to Cenni's brilliantly-hued frescoes in his *Deposition* for Volterra. Pontormo's frescoes for the Carthusian monks in Galluzzo provides one of the most complex and yet most intriguing examples, with the artist not only reacting to but residing in the surroundings and taking up the lifestyle of the patron. In each case, the artist use colour to either increase visibility, add emotion, augment beauty, or give decorum to the image.

The issue of decorum deserves more attention as it is somewhat more abstract than some of the other issues. Decorum is meant to capture the way in which artists use colour to give a certain sense to the work, a certain feeling which fits together with the location, the patron or the subject matter. Therefore, as the above mentioned instances of Fra Bartolommeo's Santa Anna altarpiece for the Signoria or Pontormo's frescoes for the Medici at Poggio a Caiano show the artist adapting the palette to some external element they are examples of decorum. One of the clearest instances of this is the suggestion that we can find an overall decorum to paintings produced during the Republican period in the early decades of the sixteenth century as was discussed with regards Fra Bartolommeo.

While we do find a certain level of continuity throughout this period in terms of colour, there are also areas in which we find marked change. In general these tend to centre on the function of colour and can be distilled to two key pairs: naturalism or convention and representation or expression. The relationship of colour modelling to technical matters and to materials in particular remains a crucial one to the topic. The technique is an old one rooted firmly in the way in which the pigments available could be used to create the illusion of form, and also one which offers little help to an artist wishing to represent the material world around them in a way which approximates our visual experience. And yet, during a time when oil painting and all of its advantages were available to them, artists in Florence returned to the conventional and non-naturalistic method of colour modelling. Function and location did not change in this short time span, and therefore it is likely that some kind of conscious if not consensual decision was made to move to this older style of creating form.

It does seem that in early sixteenth-century Florence we detect a move away from or a dissatisfaction with the painting methods which focused on representing the natural world. Most images which have been examined -- with the exception of some of Fra Bartolommeo and Andrea's pictures -- would hardly be considered in the same vein as for example Northern Renaissance painting. Andrea's two pupils have if anything a casual relationship with his concerns for unity of tonality and atmosphere. We find a kind of mannerism in these artists' use of beautiful colours, a distortion of the relationship of hues to visible reality which is very similar to the same painters distortions of proportion and of space. In particular, colour and space assist one another in that the colour-modelled figures also help to deny deep spatial development in that none of the figures recede towards the background.

The issue of colour modelling and naturalism presents a complex problem in that, although colour modelling is an admittedly artificial system, it does present a compelling impression of light and relief.[1] Through the alteration of saturation levels, tonalities and hues artists can represent a convincing image of three-dimensions which functions within pictorial constraints; that is to say, it works as an image but not as a representation of the observable world in all its details and effects of light and atmosphere. The continuation or revival of the use of colour modelling by this group of artists in Florence, particularly in the face of their knowledge of Northern painting styles and of Leonardo's ideas at this time, betrays an interest in creating or fabricating pictures which use elements of that world, but do not faithfully or literally represent the visible world around them. And it is in this way that the Florentine colour modelling system used by these artists remains one level bound to the Florentine interest in form over atmosphere.

Cangiante presents a pertinent subcategory in terms of conventional colour use. Unlike Northern artists or even later Italians, early sixteenth-century Florentine painters almost never used *cangiante* to represent specific fabrics such as shot-silk; their technique too closely resembles the older, Cenninian modelling which allowed the artist to create greater three-dimensionality in tonally light hues by changing hue to obtain a shadow. It should not be overlooked that years after Alberti and Leonardo had moved colour theory to a level no longer related so much to pigment use, and in a time when oil allowed for much greater illusions of texture and surface, artists in Florence perpetuated or returned to an old manner but one which suited their unique needs. One of these drives was to increase the expressionistic level of their images.

As regards representation and expression, artists gradually seem to turn to colour not to represent physical objects, as Leonardo did early in his career, but rather to achieve expressive or decorous ends, as in Rosso's work at Volterra. Expressive

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1 My thanks to Prof. Martin Kemp for reminding me of the implications of this issue.

use of colour in this instance denotes the use of colour on the part of the artist to impact on the emotions through for example, strength of hue as in the overriding blue in the Santa Felicità altarpiece;[2] the innate sense of blue as calming or that of red as stirring. It seems through the use of fully saturated hues in connection with particularly emotive subjects such as those associated with the Passion, Florentine artists came realise this intuitive use for colour. Certainly in the beginning of the colour modelling system, artists used the colours of various pigments in order to gain relief, and this still held true in the Ghirlandaio workshop, where they added the realisation that colour could also lend visibility. This function held true particularly well for fresco. At this stage, expression seemed to come more from figure poses and iconography than from any more formal considerations. With the realisation that relief did not have to be dependent on colour painters began to turn their attention to the other roles which colour might have. Fra Bartolommeo explored more fully the possibilities suggested by the thinness and veils now available with oil paints. Andrea del Sarto explored portraying colour quite resolutely as local colour and dealing with how it must then be subsumed by or into a lit atmosphere. But in the 1520s, and beginning quite emphatically with Rosso's Volterra *Deposition* -- perhaps the most extreme and yet earliest example -- painters in the Florentine environment begin to understand and develop the expressive capabilities of colour. Surely it is no accident that some of the most powerful images from this time, particularly in terms of colour, both deal with the *Deposition* or *Entombment*, one of the most tragic and emotion-filled stories from the already overwrought Passion story. This relates back to the idea of decorum of colour, in that artists certainly suited the colour to the content and location of the work, in this case to the subject matter, and yet it also gave colour a more firmly meaning-based function than anytime previous.

In the early example of Rosso's *Deposition*, the painter realised that by not only using fully saturated hues laid one against the other, but by also using a clearly "non-representational" manner of modelling the drapery -- yet still using the colour modelling technique -- one could use the edginess of colour and modelling to give the image a high-pitched expression not seen before. The trade off was for a loss of representation in terms of natural lighting and representation of actual form. Pontormo's *Entombment* for the Capponi Chapel presents a melding of the two functions in that he not only used colour to emphatically underscore the deeply emotional nature of the image, but dealt with colour in a way which was much more bound up in representation than for example, Rosso's Volterra altarpiece of only five years earlier. In this case, Pontormo used Leonardo's ideas of control of light to obtain beautiful colour while still using that aesthetic element in a way which also

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2 I am grateful to David Franklin for reminding me of this connection.

related to the subject matter of the work. Both Andrea and Fra Bartolommeo used similar levels of fully saturated hues in their *Lamentation/Pietàs* from roughly that same time, but without the controlled, light filled atmosphere which makes Pontormo's work so compelling. Because of Andrea's death and the loss of so many of Pontormo's late works, we will never fully understand the changes which did or could have come about in the 1530s and after. The tantalising usages towards which colour was moving at the end of the 1520s -- with Andrea's discordant *Gambassi Madonna* and Pontormo's stunningly brilliant hues in the Carmignano *Visitation* -- must remain a mystery to us.

Many of the issues raised by an examination of colour modelling in Florence directly affect our understanding of artists' attitudes during this time of flux. Colour usage in Florence was never particularly settled compared to the evolutionary development of colour in Venice for example. Clearly many of the artists working in Florence fell for a time under the influence of Michelangelo's colour use in the Sistine Chapel, with its use of colour modelling and the particular *cangianti* learned in the Florentine workshop of Ghirlandaio. That these frescoes were the work of an artist born, raised, and trained in Florentine environment cannot have been unimportant to the artists still living and working in a city which must to them have seemed to be somewhat deserted by the "stars" of the art world. By allowing Michelangelo's Roman work to influence them, these artists were not only accepting a style from the new, developing art centre in Rome, but at the same time one connected quite strongly with Florence in the artist's background, but also in the technique in which he chose to work. Nor was this the only aspect of colour modelling which attracted them. Colour modelling allowed these artists to make the same kinds of alterations with colour which they were making to composition, space, and form -- alternatives which develop very clearly from both of Michelangelo's work and from their immediate predecessors in Florence, particularly Andrea and Fra Bartolommeo. In this way, artists of Florence in the early sixteenth century were able to not only develop new uses for a time-honoured technique, but to do so in a way which became uniquely Florentine. It indeed became for them and in their hands very much "a marvellous thing."

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Fig. 1. Domenico Ghirlandaio, Study for a draped figure (c. 1476-77; Berlin: Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett)

Fig. 2. Domenico Ghirlandaio, Study for a draped figure (late 1470s; Paris: Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins)

Fig. 3. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Adoration of the Magi* (inscr. 1487; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi)

Fig. 4. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Adoration of the Magi* (inscribed 1488; Florence: Ospedale degli Innocenti)

Fig. 5. Domenico Ghirlandaio and assistants, *Madonna in Glory with Saints* (c. 1494; Munich: Pinakothek) and *St, Catherine* (c. 1494; Munich: Pinakothek)

Fig. 6. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Visitation*, Tornabuoni Chapel (1485-90; Florence: Santa Maria Novella)

Fig. 7. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Annunciation to Zacharias*, Tornabuoni Chapel (1485-90;

Florence: Santa Maria Novella)

Fig. 8. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Presentation in the Temple*, Tornabuoni Chapel (1485-90; Florence: Santa Maria Novella)

Fig. 9. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Betrothal of the Virgin*, Tornabuoni Chapel (1485-90; Florence: Santa Maria Novella)

Fig. 11. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Naming of John the Baptist*, Tornabuoni Chapel (1485-90; Florence: Santa Maria Novella)

Fig. 10. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Birth of John the Baptist*, Tornabuoni Chapel (1485-90; Florence: Santa Maria Novella)

Fig. 12. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Massacre of the Innocents*, Tornabuoni Chapel (1485-90; Florence: Santa Maria Novella)

Fig. 13. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Annunciation*, Tornabuoni Chapel (1485-90; Florence: Santa Maria Novella)

Fig. 14. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Feast of Herod*, Tornabuoni Chapel (1485-90; Florence: Santa Maria Novella)

Fig. 15. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Preaching of the Baptist*, Tornabuoni Chapel (1485-90; Florence: Santa Maria Novella)

Fig. 16. Filippino Lippi, *Raising of the Son of Theophilus*, Brancacci Chapel (c. 1481-5; Florence: Santa Maria del Carmine)

Fig. 17. Filippino Lippi, *Vision of St, Bernard* (1480; Florence: Badia Fiorentina)

Fig. 18. Filippino Lippi, *Madonna degli Otto* (inscribed 1485; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi)

Fig. 19. Filippino Lippi, *Assumption of the Virgin*, Carafa Chapel (c. 1488-93; Rome: Santa Maria Sopra Minerva)

Fig. 20. Filippino Lippi, *The Truimph of St. Thomas Aquinas* (detail), Carafa Chapel (c. 1488-93; Rome: Santa Maria Sopra Minerva)

Fig. 21. Filippino Lippi, *The Trial by Fire* and *Raising of Drusiana*, Strozzi Chapel (c. 1487-1502; Florence: Santa Maria Novella)

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Fig. 23. Michelangelo, *Doni Tondo* (c.1504-7; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi)

Fig. 24. Michelangelo, *Entombment* (c. 1500-1516; London: National Gallery)

Fig. 25. Michelangelo, *Temptation of Adam and Eve* (detail), Sistine Chapel (1508-12; Rome: Vatican)

Fig. 26. Michelangelo, *Erithrean Sibyl*, Sistine Chapel (1508-121 Rome: Vatican)

Fig. 27. Michelangelo, *Separation of Light and Darkness* (detail), Sistine Chapel (1508-12 Rome: Vatican)

Fig. 28. Michelangelo, *Delphic Sibyl*, Sistine Chapel (1508-12 Rome: Vatican)

Fig. 29. Michelangelo, *Zecharias*, Sistine Chapel (1508-12 Rome: Vatican)

Fig. 30. Michelangelo, *Cumean Sibyl*, Sistine Chapel (1508-12 Rome: Vatican)

Fig. 31. Michelangelo, *Libyan Sibyl*, Sistine Chapel (1508-12 Rome: Vatican)

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Fig. 33. Fra Bartolommeo, *Last Judgement* (1499-1500; Florence: Museo di San Marco)

Fig. 34. Fra Bartolommeo, *Vision of St. Bernard* (c. 1504-6; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi)

Fig. 35. Martiotto Albertinelli, *Visitation* (1503; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi)

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Fig. 37. Fra Bartolommeo, *Christ and the Pilgrims on the Road to Emmaus* (c. 1506-7; Florence: San Marco)

Fig. 38. Fra Bartolommeo, *God the Father with Sts, Mary Magdalene and Catharine of Siena* (c. 1508-1513; Lucca: Pinacoteca di Villa Guinigi)

Fig. 39. Giovanni Bellini, *Votive Picture of Doge Agostino Barbarigo* (inscr. 1488; Murano: San Pietro Martire)

Fig. 40. Giovanni Bellini, *Assumption of the Virgin* (c. 1510; Murano: San Pietro Martire)

Fig. 41. Giovanni Bellini, *Madonna of the Pear* (c. 1480; Bergamo: Galleria dell'Accademia Carrara)

Fig. 42. Fra Bartolommeo, *San Marco Madonna* (1509; Florence: San Marco)

Fig. 43. Fra Bartolommeo, *Pala del Gran Consiglio* (1510-13; Florence: Museo di San Marco)

Fig. 44. Leonardo da Vinci, *Adoration of the Magi* (1481; Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi)

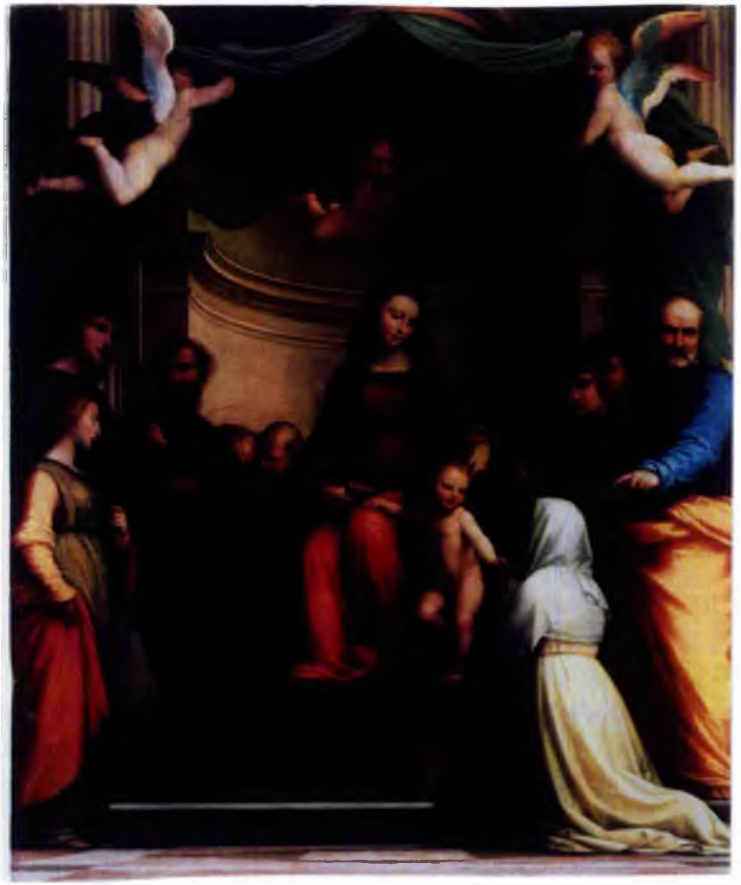

Fig. 45. Fra Bartolommeo, *Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine* (1511; Paris: Louvre)

Fig. 46. Fra Bartolommeo, *Pala Pitti* (1512; Florence: Galleria dell'Accademia)

Fig. 47. Fra Bartolommeo, *Carondelet Madonna* (1512; Stuttgart: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen)

Fig. 48. Fra Bartolommeo, *Pitti Pietà* (c. 1511/12-14; Florence: Palazzo Pitti, Galleria Palatina)

Fig. 49. Raphael, *Madonna del Baldacchino* (1507-8; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti)

Fig. 50. Fra Bartolommeo, *St, Mark Evangelist* (1514; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti)

Fig. 51. Fra Bartolommeo, *Madonna della Misericordia* (inscr. 1515; Lucca: Museo de Villa Guinigi)

Fig. 52. Fra Bartolommeo, *Salvator Mundi,* Pala Billi (1516; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti)

Fig. 53. Fra Bartolommeo, *Job*, Pala Billi (1516; Florence: Accademia

Fig. 54. Fra Bartolommeo, *Isaiah*, Pala Billi (1516; Florence: Accademia)

Fig. 55. Raphael, *Isaiah* (1512; Rome: San Agostino)

Fig. 56. Andrea del Sarto, *Girl reading Petrarch* (c. 1526-9; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi)

Fig. 57. Andrea del Sarto, Study for *Girl reading Petrarch* (c. 1526-9; Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 289 recto)

Fig. 58. Andrea del Sarto, Study for *Girl reading Petrarch* (c. 1526-9; Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 289 verso)

Fig. 59. Andrea del Sarto, *San Filippo Benizzi Clothing the Naked,* Life of San Filippo Benizzi (October 1509 and autumn 1510; Florence: SS. Annunziata, atrium)

Fig. 60. Andrea del Sarto, *San Filippo Benizzi Rebuking the Gamesters*, Life of San Filippo Benizzi (October 1509 and autumn 1510; Florence: SS. Annunziata, atrium)

Fig. 61. Andrea del Sarto, *San Filippo Benizzi Healing the Possessed Woman*, Life of San Filippo Benizzi (October 1509 and autumn 1510; Florence: SS. Annunziata, atrium)

Fig. 62. Andrea del Sarto, *Resurrection of the Child*, Life of San Filippo Benizzi (October 1509 and autumn 1510; Florence: SS. Annunziata, atrium)

Fig. 63. Andrea del Sarto, *Miracles of the Relics of San Filippo Benizzi*, Life of San Filippo Benizzi (October 1509 and autumn 1510; Florence: SS. Annunziata, atrium)

Fig. 64. Andrea del Sarto, *Journey of the Magi*, Life of the Virgin (c. 1511; Florence: SS. Annunziata, atrium)

Fig. 65. Andrea del Sarto, *Birth of the Virgin*, Life of the Virgin (inscr. 1514; Florence: SS. Annunziata, atrium)

Fig. 66. Andrea del Sarto, *San Gallo Annunciation* (1512; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti)

Fig. 67. Andrea del Sarto, *Scenes from the early life of Joseph*, Borgherini bedroom panels (1515-16; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti)

Fig. 68. Andrea del Sarto, *Pharoah consults Joseph about his dreams*, Borgherini bedroom panels (1515-16; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti)

Fig. 69. Andrea del Sarto, *Madonna of the Harpies* (inscr. 1517; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi)

Fig. 70. Andrea del Sarto, *Disputa* (c. 1517-20; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti)

Fig. 71. Andrea del Sarto, *Caritas* (inscr. 1518; Paris: Musée du Louvre)

Fig. 72. Andrea del Sarto, *Vienna Pietà* (c. 1520; Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum)

Fig. 73. Andrea del Sarto, *The Tribute to Caesar* (inscr. 1521; Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medicea)

Fig. 76. Andrea del Sarto, *Luco* or *Pitti Pietà* (1524; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti)

Fig. 74. Andrea del Sarto, *Panciatichi Assunta* (c.1521-3; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti)

Fig. 75. Andrea del Sarto, *Passerini Assunta* (c. 1527; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti)

Fig. 77. Andrea del Sarto, *Madonna del Sacco* (inscr.1525; Florence: SS. Annunziata, Chiostrino dei Morti)

Fig. 79. Andrea del Sarto, *Gambassi Madonna* (c. 1525-8; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti)

Fig. 78. Andrea del Sarto, *Last Supper* (1526-7; Florence: San Salvi)

Fig. 80. Andrea del Sarto, *Pala Vallombrosana* (inscr. 1528; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi)

Fig. 81. Jacopo Pontormo, *Madonna and Child with Saints* (c. 1514; Florence: SS. Annunziata, Cappella di San Luca)

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Fig. 86. Jacopo Pontormo, *St. Michael* and *St. John the Evangelist* (c.1519; Empoli: San Michele a Pontorme)

Fig. 87. Jacopo Pontormo, *Distribution of Grain to Joseph's Brothers and the Arrest of Simeon*, Borgherini bedroom panels (c. 1515-16; London: National Gallery)

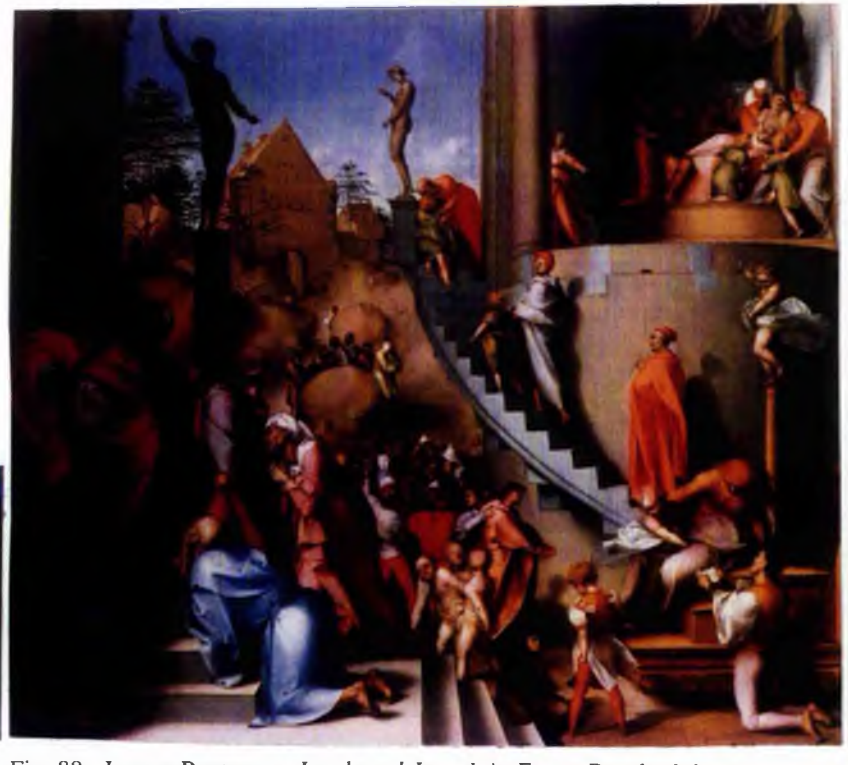

Fig. 88. Jacopo Pontormo, *Jacob and Joseph in Egypt*, Borgherini bedroom panels (c. 1518-19; London: National Gallery)

Fig. 89. Jacopo Pontormo, *Joseph Sold to Potiphar*, Borgherini bedroom panels (c. 1516-17; London: National Gallery)

Fig. 90. Jacopo Pontormo, *Butler Restored and the Baker Led to Prison*, Borgherini bedroom panels (c. 1516-17; London: National Gallery)

Fig. 91. Jacopo Pontormo, *Cosimo il Vecchio* (c. 1518-19; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi)

Fig. 92. Jacopo Pontormo, *Vertumnus and Pomona* (c. 1521; Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medicea)

Fig. 93. Jacopo Pontormo, *Agony in the Garden* (c. 1522-24; Galluzzo: Certosa di Val d'Ema)

Fig. 94. Jacopo Pontormo, *Christ Before Pilate* (c. 1522-24; Galluzzo: Certosa di Val d'Ema)

Fig. 95. Jacopo Pontormo, *Way to Golgotha* (c. 1522-24; Galluzzo: Certosa di Val d'Ema)

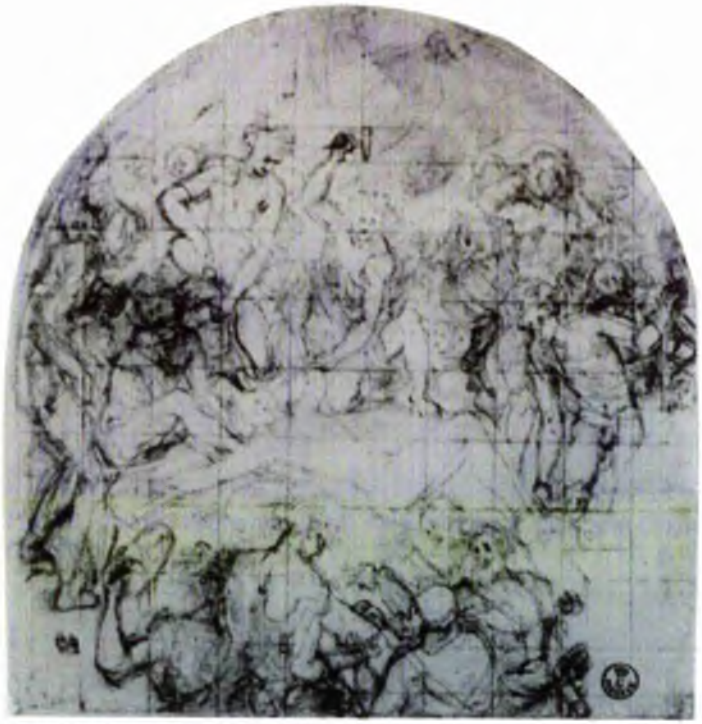

Fig. 98. Jacopo Pontormo Study for a Nailing to the Cross (Florence: Uffizi 6671F)

Fig. 96. Jacopo Pontormo, *Pietà* (c. 1522-24; Galluzzo: Certosa di Val d'Ema)

Fig. 97. Jacopo Pontormo, *Resurrection* (c. 1522-24; Galluzzo: Certosa di Val d'Ema)

Fig. 99. Albrecht Dürer, *Christ Before Pilate*,Small Passion (1511; Bar. 31)

Fig. 100. Albrecht Dürer, *Christ Before Herod*, Small Passion (1511; Bar. 32)

Fig. 101. Albrecht Dürer, *The Bath House* (1497; Bar. 128)

Fig. 102. Albrecht Dürer, *Crucifixion*, Large Passion (c. 1497-1500; Bar. 11)

Fig. 103. Albrecht Dürer, *Lamentation*, Large Passion (c. 1497-1500; Bar. 12)

Fig. 104. Albrecht Dürer, *Entombment*, Small Passion (1511; Bar. 44)

Fig. 105. Albrecht Dürer, *The Austrian Saints* (c. 1512-15; Bar. 116)

Fig. 106. Jacopo Pontormo, *Supper at Emmaus* (inscr.1525; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi)

Fig. 107. Jacopo Pontormo, *Entombment*, Capponi Chapel (c. 1525-7; Florence: Santa Felicità)

Fig. 108. Raphael, *Entombment* (1507; Rome: Galleria Borghese)

Fig. 109. Fra Angelico, *Entombment* (c. 1438-40; Munich: Alte Pinakothek)

Fig. 110. Jacopo Pontormo, *Annunciation*, Capponi Chapel (c. 1525-8; Florence: Santa Felicità)

Fig. 111. Jacopo Pontormo (?), *Pietà with Saints* (c. 1517-18/1530; Dublin: National Gallery)

Fig. 112. Jacopo Pontormo, Study for a Pietà (c. 1519; Florence, Uffizi 300Fr)

Fig. 113. Jacopo Pontormo, Study for the Santa Felicità *Entombment* (c. 1525-8; Christ Church, Oxford (F68))

Fig. 114. Jacopo Pontormo, *Visitation* (c. 1528; Carmignano: San Michele)

Fig. 115. Jacopo Pontormo, *Madonna and Child with Sts, Anne, Peter, Sebastian, Benedict, and the Good Thief* (c. 1529; Paris: Louvre)

Fig. 116. Raphael, *Transfiguration* (c. 1518-20; Rome: Vatican Galleries)

Fig. 117. Jacopo Pontormo, *Noli Me Tangere* (c. 1531-2; Florence: Casa Buonarroti)

Fig. 118. Jacopo Pontormo, *Venus and Cupid* (c. 1533; Florence: Accademia)

Fig. 119. Rosso Fiorentino, *Assumption of the Virgin*, Life of the Virgin (c. 1514; Florence: SS. Annunziata, atrium)

Fig. 120. Rosso Fiorentino, *Pala Ripoi* (1518; Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi)

Fig. 123. Rosso Fiorentino, *Madonna and Child with Saints John and Bartholomew* (inscr. 1521; Volterra: Museo Diocesano)

Fig. 121. Rosso Fiorentino, *Deposition from the Cross* (inscr. 1521; Volterra: Pinacoteca Communale)

Fig. 122. Filippino Lippi (completed by Pietro Perugino), *Deposition* (c. 1512; Florence: Accademia)

Fig. 124. Cenni di Francesco, *St, Helena Brings the Cross to the Adoring Throngs* (detail), Oratorio di Santa Croce (c. 1410; Volterra: San Francesco)

Fig. 125. Cenni di Francesco, *Saint John the Baptist*, Oratorio di Santa Croce (c. 1410; Volterra: San Francesco)

Fig. 126. Cenni di Francesco, *Massacre of the Innocents* (detail), Oratorio di Santa Croce (c. 1410; Volterra: San Francesco)

Fig. 127. Michelangelo, *Achim and Eliud* (detail), Sistine Chapel (1508-12; Rome: Vatican)

Fig. 128. Michelangelo, *Asa, Jehosaphat and Joram* (detail), Sistine Chapel (1508-12; Rome: Vatican)

Fig. 129. Michelangelo, *Amminadab* (detail), Sistine Chapel (1508-12; Rome: Vatican)

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Fig. 131. Michelangelo, *Naason* (detail), Sistine Chapel (1508-12; Rome: Vatican)

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Fig. 133. Rosso Fiorentino, *Pala Dei* (inscr. 1522; Florence: Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti)

Fig. 134. Rosso Fiorentino, *Betrothal of the Virgin* (inscr. 1523; Florence: San Lorenzo)

Fig. 135. Rosso Fiorentino, *Dead Christ with Angels* (c. 1524; Boston: Museum of Fine Arts)

Fig. 136. Rosso Fiorentino, *Death of Cleopatra* (c. 1524; Brunswick: Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum)

Fig. 137. Rosso Fiorentino, *Deposition from the Cross* (1527; Sansepolcro: Convento delle Sorelle delle Orfanelle)

Fig. 138. Rosso Fiorentino, ***Risen Christ in Glory with the Virgin, Three Saints and the People of Città di Castello*** (1528; Città di Castello: Duomo)